A British Lāṇnaạ†

Kit Tiyapan

>: Kittix

† This spelling 'Lāṇnaạ' used in the title is Lanna. Compare this with the Thai spelling, 'Lāṇnạ' and the English 'Lanna'.

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The National Lottery was launched by in November 1994. Lottery tickets cost £1 each. The player chooses six numbers between 1 and 49, and wins a prize if three or more of them match the winning numbers drawn each week. The jackpot is divided among the luckiest winners, if there are more than one, and is carried over to the following week if no one matches all his six numbers. The prize money comprises 50% of the weekly takings, 28% goes to arts, charities, national heritage and other good causes, 12% becomes taxes while the remaining 10% goes to its operators the Camelot Consortium and approximately 10,000 retail outlets. The Millennium Fund is funded by the Lottery money, and so are the literature books given to major libraries in Thailand.

Manchester in 1994 is a quiet town. I come here to study at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, or UMIST as it is always called. I study Control Systems in the Mill, which is one of the buildings of the university. We study nine months of course works, and then there is a three month period to do your dissertation project. Towards the end of 2000 I come back again to do my PhD.

The Greater Manchester is a metropolitan county of northwest England that was created in 1974. In 1986 most of the functions of the county council were transferred to metropolitan district councils, namely Bolton, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport and Wigan. The Manchester Ship Canal was opened in 1894 and links the city of Manchester with the River Mersey and the sea. It is 35.5 mile long, 45 – 80 feet wide, has five locks and links Manchester to Eastham in Merseyside. It turns Manchester into a port city and has brought ocean-going vessels to this inland centre of the Industrial Revolution.

In the Romans' time Manchester was a camp known as Mancunium or Mamucium. It is mentioned in the Domesday Book, a survey record compiled in 1086 under William the Conqueror. By the 13^{th} century it has become a centre of the wool trade. On 16 August 1819 there was an attack by Yeomanry and hussars on people gathering in St Peter's Fields in Manchester in an open-air meeting to support the parliament reform, the Peterloo massacre, when eleven people were killed and 500 wounded. The *Manchester Guardian* was founded in 1821, now the *Guardian*, a national newspaper.

Among the many newspapers in the UK, the *Guardian* is owned by a nonprofit trust. *The Times* and the *Independent* is popular among the rich, so their advertising space is more expensive. The *Observer* was started in 1791.

In 1500 the English printer Wynkyn de Worde set up the first press in Fleet Street, London. The first newspaper *Mercurius Gallobelgicus* was printed in London in 1590. In 1701 Francis Burgess founded the *Norwich*

Post, which was the first newspaper to be published outside London. E. Mallet's *Daily Courant* came out on 2 March 1702. Then came in 1730 – 1807 the *Daily Advertiser*, in 1778 the *Whitehall Evening Post* with its sport news, in 1780 the *British Gazette and Sunday Monitor*. The first newspaper in Welsh is the *Seren Gomer* which was launched on 1st January 1814. *The Times* began to includes photographs in 1842, and daily weather forecasts in 1875. In 1881 came the *Evening Illustrated Newspaper*, and in 1900 Cyril Arthur Pearson's *Express*. In 1967 the *London Daily Express* was transmitted electronically to Puerto Rico. Rupert Murdoch from Australia bought the *Sun* in 1969 and turned it into a tabloid. In 1990 the *Northern Echo* in Darlington put newspaper on CD-ROM.

The rivers Irk, Irwell, Medlock, Mersey and Tib flow through the city, parts of which are now underground. The Mersey-Irwell Canal was established in 1720 to connect Liverpool and Manchester, the Bridgewater Canal from Worsley to Manchester in 1763 to carry coal from collieries of the 3rd Duke of Bridgewater to the city, and the westward extension of it to Runcorn in 1766. At the end of the 18th century canals ere built to Bolton, Huddersfield, Oldham, Rochdale and Todmorden.

In 1830 a railway connected Liverpool and Manchester's station on Liverpool Road. A line to Bolton was opened in 1838, to Leeds in 1841, to Birmingham and London in 1842, and to Sheffield and Lincolnshire in 1845. The Exchange Station, built in 1844, was connected by a long platform to Victoria Station in 1845. A line to Altrincham was opened in 1849. Central Station was begun in 1867 and the Store Street station of 1842 became London Road station and then Piccadilly Station.

During the 18th century more affluent people lived in Didsbury, Fallowfield and Withington to the south which is the least industrialised part of the city, in particular places beside the railway line to Altrincham. In 1951 Manchester and its surrounding cities were defined as a conurbation. The town hall designed by Alfred Waterhouse and completed in 1877 has a spire 285 feet high. The Free Trade Hall was Renaissance in its style. The Midland Hotel was built in 1898 and the Young Men's Christian Association in 1909. In June an IRA bomb exploded in the Arndale Shopping Centre.

On top of the Free Trade Hall along Windmill Street there are figures of men or various professions in reliefs. These sit on top of the columns on a huge wall which covers the whole length of the building and rises up to approximately five storeys high, giving a solemn and timeless look. I used to sit on a bench and looked at these figures for a long time. With its Grade II status it is listed in the top six per cent of nationally listed buildings. According to Manchester's Lord Mayor William Collingson in

1951 it symbolises the traditional independence of Manchester's people, their love of liberty, tolerance and fearless loyalty to ideals. The city council wants to sell the building, and after two years of campaign a petition was made by the Friend of the Free Trade Hall and the Civic Society that led to a nine-day public inquiry and the proposal being rejected in October 1998. The fourth proposals effaces everything except for the Peter Street frontage and three bays in Southmill Street, and turns the building into a 16-storey hotel. In 2002 the part opposite to the Manchester Convention Centre with its reliefs was pulled down. To me this seems a mistake. I do hope that they have preserved those figures on the columns' top and installed them in a safe place, even though more likely they would have lost the hypnotising effect they had enjoyed in the setting above that plain rectangle underneath. That overall composition is priceless compared with the whole of the present MCC. It is true the two are different, for the former has character and is thus better.

It is sad when something has to go only because they are different. But other newer buildings are luckier, especially those which come with exterior ornate terracotta. Conservation depends on our current tastes, or at least our decision on what to throw away and what to keep does. An example of this is the two buildings dated from the early 1900s and 1960s that used to house the National Boiler and the General Insurance Company headquarters near Parsonage Gardens, which are renovated into the £1 million penthouse Century Buildings, designed by Assael Architecture for the developers Nicholson Estates.

Here in Manchester was born and lived the painter Laurence Stephen Lowry (1887 – 1976). He developed in the 1920s a style characterised by naive matchstick figures, which I think is influenced by the works of Pieter Bruegel (? 1525 / 1530 – 1569), especially the latter's *Les Chasseurs dans la neige* (1565). He has painted some historically invaluable scenes.

In September 2000 I came back to Manchester again in order to do a Ph.D. in Languages. The Department has recently split into two parts, that is Translation and Language Engineering. I stick to the former because the tuition fee is cheaper.

Ken is still in working in Bristol. I have never been there, but I can talk with him via the Internet. I told him that I plan to write a book on Muay Thai and he says he want to read it sometimes. He thinks that UMIST is a bit boring compared to Manchester Uni.

They are completing the M60 ring road around Manchester. In October 1960 the Stretford-Eccles bypass, M63, was opened. Back then a gallon of petrol costed less than 30 pence. The motorway era also means the drastic reduction of road accidents. Between 1926 and 1960 the per

cent death by road accidents dropped by one order. By 1998 it had dropped further by another half an order. The bus deregulation brought with it many problems. The standards declined, the buses became old and dilapidated, the fares rises, but evening and Sunday services were being withdrawn and through-ticketing lessens. People tried to avoid travelling by bus, and between 1986 and 1996 the number of passengers boarding dropped by more than 30 per cent. Now the GMPTE is trying to improve this. I met some people on board the bus asking me to fill a questionnaire. That was when we went to Gaby's place for a party. Carmen has already arrived, and I am doing some translating jobs. Gaby introduced us all to her friend who owns a company that does translations, but he was not interested in a Thai who also knows Japanese.

The majority of old buildings in Manchester are built in the 19^{th} century. Most buildings listed as Grade I, however, are those built during the 18^{th} century, for example the Heaton Hall (1772) in Heaton Park. I have seen pictures of three dilapidated 17^{th}-century buildings, namely the Clegg Hall (*c.*1610) in Milnrow, the Old Hall Chapel (late 16^{th} or early 17^{th} century) in Dukinfield, and the Staley Hall (16^{th} or 17^{th} century) in Stalybridge. These are all listed buildings considered at risk. Another Grade I building in the Manchester area which is at risk is the Baguley Hall in Baguley which was built during late mediaeval. All the other areas have their own share of buildings at risk, that is Bolton, Bury, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside and Wigan. Those older ones are the Apethorn Farmhouse (Hyde, 15^{th} century) and the Hyde Hall (Denton, late 16^{th} century) in Tameside, and the Staircase House (Market Place, late 15^{th} or 16^{th} century). It is good that the Lottery is with us. The Heritage Lottery Fund has decided to fund the Victoria Baths in Longsight. Firstly the Victoria Baths Partnership will build The Spring, a living centre at the complex in Hathersage Road.

My second book has turned out to be useful to myself. I have already used it several times when doing translation from Thai into English. As you probably know that translation from Thai into English is more difficult to do than that from English into Thai, but that is what I have been doing most of the times now. *Harry Potter* has become a hit in Thailand after *Lord of the rings* by John Ronald Reuel Tolkien (1892 – 1973). I've also heard people say that is a good book. But I am a bit skeptical because I don't follow other people's definition of good books, even though my idea sometimes agrees with theirs. I want to translate Shakespeare's works. I find his Sonnets are subtle and difficult to translate. So I probably will turn to translating his *Julius Caesar* first. The progress is very slow at the moment. I've got a new computer

to work on, and I'm trying to get used to it. Mona has given me a desk and a computer. She wants me to do something on the Translation Corpus for her in Java and XML. Graham went over to the Translation group one day to talk with her and Peter. Mona says he regards my ability highly. But to me he says he wants me to put down everything else and concentrate on only Voronoi Network and Percolation.

I join the Community Action at UMIST again. One Saturday we go together to a house of a disabled elderly to do gardening. There are Catherine who is a staff, Mary a Malaysian student and Alissa from some Chinese-speaking country. Both Alissa and Mary will do the home-visiting scheme. But I probably will not do it again, since Clare is now in an elderlies' home and no longer need my visit, and I do not want to visit just anybody. We cut the grass in the backyard garden and trim the bushes in front of the house. For lunch Catherine lets our client pay for the fish and chips. I wish she had used our own budget instead. I am now helping John doing the Day Care project where elderly people come to UMIST on Wednesday's afternoon, and we sit down and talk to each other in a room in the Main Building.

My brother's son Nhŭeng enters the Chiangmai University in Jiangmhăi where he becomes a good student, at the top of his class. If there is an opportunity of getting a KB scholarship for doing degrees in the States it would be very good for him too. Contrary to what people in Thailand believed in the past, I am sure that there will be no problems doing your first degree overseas. The world is getting smaller and smaller all the time. Even with what telecommunication and Internet infra-structure we have got now, I feel that going to other countries has become a help instead of a hindrance. I never believe in the *reverse brain-drain* policy of calling all the professionals of Thai nationality back to Thailand to serve their nation. I always advocate a distributed system where you work wherever possible for the benefit of the whole world, which incidentally includes the country the nationality of which you hold.

The weather here is getting colder. Today is 19 November 2000, I have got a lot of things to do. I am just starting to do my project. The progress is slow, and I fear that it will be so for a while. There are a few hindrances which make the going not as quick as it should be. I also have to polish up my computer skill and learn more. I have been doing a few translation jobs. I might have to find a job in a restaurant also if I want to save some money for what I want to do afterwards. I would like to work on Languages and Literature in the future. Have been unable to write any book so far since I've been here. This is no good! It has been quite a while since my second book came out. I would really love to see another one. I no longer want to look at the previous two. Today

the weather has been nice, and it was hot. Two days ago I went with some friends to Middlebrough, which is northeast of, and about one hour driving from Manchester. It was a good trip.

There are pianos here at UMIST that I could play. They are in the rooms C2 and C16 in the Reynold Building and the room C14 and the Entrance Hall in the Main Building. The ones in C2 and in the Entrance Hall are grand pianos, and between them the latter one is the older and the one I prefer. But later someone comes and tunes it, and after that everything is wrong and all the harmonies becomes a chaos. I think the dampers and the mechanism become loose.

Friday 1st December 2000, only one month to go before the Y2K ends. The year 2000 has not been a havoc as many people had feared. It could be because we are well prepared. I used to see in a mainframe-computer journal of as early as 1980s this problem of the computer coping with the change of the date from 1999 to 2000. Simon has just received his PhD, and now he is working with the Information Support Department. I have had troubles using Netscape on Cosmos, our Unix machine, and today he is going to look into it for me. They are having teething troubles with their new query reporting software, and he apologise for replying late. Zaiem also looks after the machine, and he later teach me how to kill a job in a queue by using `qdel`.

I am doing a research in Chemical Engineering now. Perhaps I will start being a Ph.D. student again in January. The department will pay for the cost of living as well as for the tuition fee. I later learn, however, that this is from my supervisor Graham's personal fund. I could also do part-time jobs sometimes. So for me it's good to be here when compared to my last two years with nothing to do in Thailand. I should like to do researches on Language and Literature as well as on Engineering. Who knows, I might come to do some on, for example, Polovsian's weaponry and fighting style. Or even on Polovsian dances, for that matter. I do not yet have any plan for Christmas. Our Community Action is organising a Christmas Party for the elderlies. It's going to be early next month. The weather is getting cold.

Ikan is a Malay word for fish. It is the name of a restaurant near UMIST which boasts Thai food, but the owner of which is no Thai. Another Japanese resturant where I have been thinking about doing a part-time job as a cook has an owner who is from Philippine.

Today is 5 December 2000. Tomorrow there is going to be a Christmas Party by the CA for elderly people. I will be there helping them arrange the place. The weather is fine half of the time, while for the rest of the time it is cloudy. There is never a heavy rain, though there had been some hail and hail sleet last month. To have these early days of winter

like this might mean that there will be snow sleet, or even snow, after Christmas. There has been a flood in Songkhla in south of Thailand, 9 December. I have another email address, mjkvjkt@fs1.ce.umist.ac.uk, which is Chemical Engineering's.

I write to John my teacher, 12 December, to say that I have come back to do a PhD at the Chemical Engineering Department. I ask him whether it is possible that I have a Unix account at the Control System Centre again. About this I have already asked Susan who said that I should ask him first to see whether CE will be paying for my access. I want to use the AVS geometry program on cosmos.umist. The program can not display its graphical output when accessed from a PC, and CE no longer houses a Unix. UMIST's computers have split from the Manchester Information Centre at the University of Manchester, and is now at its trough. This *no-Unix* policy, extended to Linux and the likes, strongly smells of influences from that true government of the US, Microsoft, and its owner Bill. I saw attached to the door at one computer facility of the U. of Man. a printout which says that any student of UMIST found using the computer there will be handed over to the police and prosecuted for trespassing. I remember myself being flabbergasted. I sincerely offer my help with no high hopes for the results, for the Control System Centre is currently running out of funds. Anyhow, whatever I know there are always people at CSC who knows better.

In front of the Student Union I was stopped by Jane who said that she had just arrived from China. She guessed that I must either come from China or speak Chinese, and was surprised to learn that neither was the case. She only wanted to ask whether I knew about any Christmas parties of Chinese people. I can not imagine her coming all this distance here just to do this.

December comes quickly, when Maki is in the US and has TOEFL and WPE exams coming up, 11 December 2000. Wednesday 13 December, Yukiko writes from Tokyo to say that she has no digital cameras, or else she would have sent me some pictures. She is a photographer of Tokyo's Meguro's council. The following day Michiko says that she has heard from her that I shut myself up in my home in Bangkok like a ninja, and she reminds me that I still have not answered the Christmas card she sent last year, which makes me feel guilty. But being a hermit is a good excuse. She no longer works as an interpreter at the City Office, but has now switched to doing translations after having taken some courses.

Our Day Care go together to the Cheshir Line Tavern for lunch. Catherine is leaving CA soon, so this is also to say farewell to her. Mrs Sloan gives me a big box of chocolate for Christmas. Joan and Betty give me a card which turns out to have a £5 note inside. Mrs Davenport

and Mrs Millns give me £2, which makes me a little uneasy because we are volunteers. But I keep the money, and later buy some piano music at reduced price from the library at the RNCM. It is raining all the time, so we can not go to the garden outside. John is also here because he is the project leader.

Sunday 17 December, it has been very cold for a couple of days. I think we may have snow this year. If so, there will have been snow every time I am in England, and that has been once every five years because the first time I was here was in 1989, then the second time during 1994-5 and now it is 2000-1. From what I have heard, there had been no snow whenever I stayed away. Nothing much happens around here at this time of the year because it is coming on to Christmas and New Year. Most people have gone home for the celebration.

Both Zen and Cīk write me emails to tell how our Greek class in Bangkok is doing. Zen now works part-timely at the Tops supermarket. It costs 15 baht an hour for her to email. This semester she learns Indian History, but she failed a exam in Greek. She wants to write a novel.

Tuesday 19 December, I start working part-time at the *yakitori* restaurant Samsi. Hohei is the manager, Simon looks after the bar and Naoki the chef. I work here about a month, not everyday but around twice a week. Then I decide to stop because I find our chef a rather difficult person, and because I can learn nothing new.

Well it is now 22 December 2000. I like the look of the date today, 22 – 12 – 2000. I am no good at keeping in touch with people. I can still remember vividly the last time Michiko, Yukiko and me met. They took me to an aquarium which proves to be a good and memorable experience, similar to the Meguro City tours they earlier organised, for instance the one when we went to a rubbish incinerator plant and another one where went to an earthquake prevention centre. I am glad I did go along at that time. Work we do forget about, but these things we do not. I had been like a hermit or a ninja for sometimes after I had gone back to Thailand. I had been out of job for a very long time, and to go out invariably meant to have to spend some money. I had applied to no less than 100 jobs, with no success. I had regretted I had not persevere harder while in Japan. I put off answering letters. This year I have not written a single card. I either have become unsocialable or, to be more merciful to myself, have come to retain only the bare necessities of life. I did not feel that I was up to writing to anyone for the past two years while I was in Thailand. During those two years I took to teach English to two small classes at a private tutoring school. Otherwise I lived solely on the meagre income that came from those materials and documents I had been asked to translate. I used to go to various shops that advertise

a translation service, and left them one of my make-shift business cards. But I could have become richer than I am now translating, had I not declined all those jobs that I did not think interesting enough to do. Those that I did translate tended to be difficult and poorly paid albeit interesting. Among these was one medical paper about a research for new medicines to combat baldness. It is written in Portuguese, and I was asked to translate it into Thai. Apart from this I have written two books. They are both written in Thai on subjects related to the English language. One is titled 'Interesting English', in Thai *Bhaṣa Ankṛiṣ an nàsoncai*, which was written from my own experience since my 6th Form English classes in New Zealand. I spent 10 months there as an American Field Service cultural exchange student. My second book is titled, 'Free Translation of English', or in Thai *Plae kleď Ankṛiṣ*. It is about translating between English and Thai. In it I try to address most important issues that impede translations. I spare no translating difficulties. Many of the examples I introduce as examples are what people have tried to avoid talking about. Some are thought by many to be impossible to translate. There you go, 'Sapere aude!', a bid in Latin to have courage.

There is in Manchester the Coronation Street and the English Heritage is helping its residents keep their cobbled street from being tarmacked over. The soap opera Coronation Street (began 1961) probably has its name taken from this street, because it is made for ITV by Granada which is here in Manchester. These soap operas are on-going, omnipresent dramas in British TV schedules. Some examples are Brookside (began 1982), East Enders (began 1985) and Emmerdale (began 1972 as Emmerdale Farm).

According to the guidance from the government's planning, new developments in the city centre area should never clutter up the external space, setbacks at upper floors should never be overdone, and bars and gates should be used instead of slid shutters. Active users such as shops and restaurants, arcades, colonnades, entrances, verandas and windows are encouraged on facades. They say that the Free Trade Hall (1853 – 56) stands on the hallowed ground of the Peterloo Massacre, and so should be preserved on that ground. In 1844 Benjamin Disraeli (1804 – 1881) spoke here, in 1862 Gladstone, in 1884 H M Stanley lectured here on 'geographical science', and in 1907 Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill (1874 – 1965). Charles John Huffam Dickens (1812 – 1870) as here every year for 20 years until 1868. On 16 May 1966 Bob Dylan performed a concert here. I like the building looks nice and unique, and they should keep it. The building stands on the Peter Street and Deansgate Conservation Area, and by the Listed Buildings and Conservation

Area Act 1990 it should be preserved and enhanced. Now they are tearing half of the poor thing down, and it is the half that I like because of its uniqueness as I said, but they will do it anyhow. They want to build a five-star hotel here. What a pity!

Some cinemas are saved, some are destroyed, yet others become a pub. The Regal Twin Cinema opposite the BBC on Oxford Road opened in 1930 and closed in 1986. Since 1992 it has become the Northern Ballet School. The Forum in Northenden was opened in 1934, turned into the ABC, became a live theatre in 1974 and is now the Jehovah's Witness Hall. Both the Ambassador (1928) in Salford and the Plaza Cinema in Stockport have become Grade II listed. The future of the Empress Elecric Theatre (1912) in Miles Platting is still uncertain. Its facade is made of red Accrington brick. As it was built in the early days of purpose-built cinemas, it is a surprise it has not been listed before the others mentioned. The site where the Midland Hotel is nowadays, in Lower Mosley Street, used to be the Gentlemen's Concert Hall. It was in white and gold, panelled in mahogany, and had a 60 feet high dome. Here Mendelssohn conducted his Elijah in 1847, only months before his death. Chopin gave his recitals here in August 1848 when Karl Halle was also in the audience.

The Manchester Airport Pollution Advisory Council tries to reduce the level of nitrogen dioxide in the city, which is not as bad as the pea-souper smog of 50 years ago. Seven main air pollutants have been set apart and standard imposed. They are benzine, 1,3-butadiene, carbon monoxide, fine particles, lead nitrogen dioxide and sulphur dioxide.

Midori says on 28 December that the networks in Grosvenor Street Building has been down since Christmas Eve. She is going to spend New Year in London. It has been snowing in Manchester; 29 December 2000. The cold front has come down from Scotland and I think it is still here, even though the weather forecast said that there will not be any more snow now. It snows every time I am in England. When I was here in 1989 it snowed in March. It also snowed in 1994/1995 when I was here in Manchester. So I guess that it snows once every five years here. This time they predict one of the coldest winters in U.K.

Saturday 30th December 2000, Yukiko has sent a New Year card and photo from Nepal. The picture looks so nice I wish I had been there with her. I have not written a single New Year card this year, only a few messages 'Merry Christmas and Happy New Year' via emails. I send one of these to her because Manchester is now covered in snow. It is white everywhere and you can hardly see the sun. This must be one of the coldest winter we ever have around here. In a town where it could be many years before one see any snow it has been such a surprise. Seeing

icicles hanging here and there when I come to the university I imagine to myself that an ice age is coming and all the earth is going to be covered with snow, or that I had gone back millions of years in time to the time when the world was all covered with ice. But then again there is this computer I am sitting in front of now. So I still could not make up my mind what has happened to the world, but I would not be surprised at all if I saw mammoths in my dreams tonight. With icicles under the arches of the viaducts and the world darkened all around, a prehistoric animal towering behind the Archimedes getting up from his bath would not have seemed out of place. But I must tread more carefully here as the steps has become all icy and slippery. It is so quiet around here at this time of the year when everyone has gone home for a visit. They have been showing James Bond movies on the television recently. Though I have managed to missed most of these, what I did see I really did enjoyed. I think Yukiko should publish the photos she has taken in a book.

I only stay in Manchester during the Christmas and New Year holidays. Most people has gone away to celebrate them with their family. Even my family in Thailand go together to Auḅ Khạn, supposedly another spectacular gorge as the name seems to imply. It is quite quiet around here in Manchester. My present telephone number, +44 – 161 – 933 – 4517, goes directly first to my room, but then if I am not there transfers the incoming call to the central answering machine. I do not like this much, because to get a message you need to dial to that central machine which takes quite a while to connect before which many a button has to be pressed. I have recently rearranged my room again, as everyone must have already known by now. I am always happy after I have just reorganised my room.

On the night of 7 January 2001 it snows for the first time in Tokyo. Michiko wrote back, 'Nana korobi, ya oki' †, in response of my writing to her previously, 'Sapere aude!' ‡ Her eldest son comes of age today.

Failings give us a valuable experience in a sense that they give one the necessity to look at other possibilities. To succeed in one thing is essentially to fail at other things. I had managed, for instance, to pass exams for my bachelor and my master degrees, and therefore in a way have succeeded there. But at the same time I have failed to become an astronomer or an astrophysicist, which is what my childhood dream really are. In other words that is the question, 'to be or not to be' as Shakespeare poses in Hamlet. It is similar to the question of choice which

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† You may fall down again the seventh time, but you can get up the eighth time. This idea is represented in the round figure of a Daruma, which never falls.

‡ Have courage!

some later called Existentialism. My flat mate Cloe says that the phrase has been translated into Chinese which means, 'to die or not to die', which is nonsense I think, because *to die or not to die* means nothing whereas *to be or not to be* everything.

Tuesday 16 January 2001, there is a news that Fulcrum TV wants to recruit students who are fluent in more than one language and are willing to tell their story, to go on a television program about multilingualism in the UK for the BBC. It is announced by Zoe, the present President of the Student Union.

I write to my supervisor Katsuhisa in Japan congratulating him for his new position at another university, the Tokyo Denki University. It is good after you have retired to still be able to carry on doing the things you like. I had not kept in touch with him because I the access to neither the Unix nor Matlab while in Thailand, and so would not have been able to write up my PhD thesis for him. Now that I am back at UMIST, I have recently started to use a Unix again from my new account at the Control Systems Centre here. I tell him that I am not sure whether it is still possible for me to carry on my work for Ph.D. 'If it is,' I write, 'I would like to do it because it was one of those things I had not managed to complete'. I ask him whether there is still a copy of my old home directory on the computer or in the backups. I kept track of my work as notes which I kept in my directory. With them I think I would be able to carry on from where I left out. 'Sorry that I decided to resign then instead of persevering', I tell him. I want to write up a PhD thesis either for the Tokyo Institute of Technology where I was, or for some other university in Japan. But he must have understood it the other way, that is that I want to use the things I had done while in Japan to complete my PhD here in the UK. So he replies that all he can suggest is that I should contact three other persons for my files, all of whom turn out to say the same thing, that my home directory is gone and there had been no backups. I make me sad to think that I had worked like hell for him until the end of my stay in Japan we have known each other for five years, but he is still capable of thinking that I would use the works that I had done with the funding from the Japanese Government for a degree in another country.

I have read books on the decipherment of the Minoan scripts, in particular the Mycenean Linear B script by Michael Ventris. I change the name *technical reports* and *research records* that I used to call my own works into simply *work notes* the way he had done. And I give some of these work notes to Mona, when they are related to Languages, or to Graham when they are about Geometry.

Sunday 21st January 2001, an email came from Yukiko. Winter in

Japan has been becoming milder. Not long ago she went to Hakuba in Nagano prefecture where the Winter Olympic Games was held three years ago. It is usually covered with a lot of snow at this time of the year but there was no snow. The ski resort was closed due to the absence of snow. But the mountains still look nice. 'Seeing the overwhelmingly beautiful scenery of the place,' she wrote, 'the other side of the world where Gods would come down from the heaven, will certainly move you'. It must have been all right because she plans to climb the mountains there again. Yes, I could join her, she said, but I need to start doing plenty of exercises now in order to the altitude sickness before I could climb 5000 metres up the mountain. I am going to start saving some money now. I have no clues how much it would cost, but I will worry myself about that later. She adds in the postscript that it has become very cold these days. Now it is snowing heavily in Japan too. 'You may be right to say an ice age is coming', she says, then adds that it is snowing outside and Tokyo is in white all over.

Wednesday 31 January, pick up people again for our Day Care. There is a pizza party at the Avila House at 7 pm.

The weather is getting warmer and warmer all the time. You can feel it. This morning I really thought that spring is already here. But it is not yet because we still have frost on the ground early each morning; 6th February. Sometimes I ask myself why I am here doing what I am doing, and could not answer. I guess it does not matter. There are things that you can neither understand nor reason.

A Wednesday and therefore Day Care, but John is not well so we do without him, 7 February. Everything is all right, but I forgot to get some milk. I ask the catering ladies next door where we normally get hot water for some, and they gave me plenty. I mention to our ladies that there is an picture exhibition by one UMIST student who has just graduated from the textile department, K.K.K., in the entrance hall on B floor. Everybody seems to be enthusiastic and interested, so we go down the transparent lift just before three o'clock, after our tea and coffee, to have a quick look at the exhibition. We have a good time together. Mrs. Sloan thinks that the entrance hall itself is more beautiful than the pictures. We talk about Art Galleries. Mrs. Carter also know about the special exhibition at the Whitworth Art Gallery. She too could not remember what it was. Then she talked about the Museum of Costumes in Platt Halls on Platt Fields, and I told her that I had been there and have found it interesting myself. Museums and Galleries would be interesting for us to visit. They provide a leisure stroll that suits the nature of our group, as well as something worthwhile for a mind to digest. No one seems to mind going to any one of these places. Apart from this, going

to gardens on a fine day could be a nice change. The two ladies from the Royle court and Mrs. Carter are unable to join us this week. We normally meet in the CA office at 12:30 before Rob and another one of us go in a van to pick up our ladies. We used to have gentlemen coming along too, or so I have heard, but they gradually disappeared from the scene perhaps because we did not go out often or because there was nothing interesting for them to do.

On Saturday 17 February, travel to St Albans to stay with Met and Bill. Sunday 18th, they drop me at St. Albans Station before they go to Luton. Then I go to London, walk to the British Museum and then to Travel Inn, Westminster. The Student Volunteering Launch is at the House of Parliament on Monday morning when there may be a tube strike.

St. Alban lived during the third century. He was born at Verulamium, served in the Roman army, converted to Christianity and was beheaded for professing his belief. King Offa founded a monastery in 793 on the site of his martyrdom. His feast day is 20 June.

The British Museum was founded in 1753 and in 1759 opened in London. The present buildings were constructed during 1823 – 47. The Natural History Museum moved to South Kensington in 1881.

There are two Houses of Parliament, that is the House of Lords and the House of Commons. Originally the former was the more important one, then they crashed, and in the end the latter has become the stronger one. The Act of 1911, the Parliament Bill of 1947 and the Parliament Act of 1949 have all curbed the powers of the upper house. The word *Lord* comes from Old English *hlaford* which means a *bread keeper*.

After the Launch at Westminster I do some sightseeing of London by myself. There is an area north of the city with an inviting street on which there are shops selling various different things from clothes to circus juggling clubs. There is a foot tunnel through which you could cross under the Thames from one side to another on foot. The tunnel connects Greenwich with London, and similarly the Blackwall Tunnel which is for vehicles. You go down in a spacious lift which is operated by a staff. The tunnel takes a while to walk because the Thames river is wide there. You may bring your bicycle with you so long as you push it along and not cycle. The crossing is safe owing to the CCTV cameras inside both the tunnel and the lifts.

London is a good place to visit, especially when you know before hand what you want to see and do. I went to the British Museum, Camden Market near the Camden Lock and Canary Wharf's millennium sites which I thought was very like a certain part of Tokyo. I also walked under and across the Thames in a pedestrian tunnel from Greenwich to

the Island Gardens. Two clay tablets written in the Linear B script of 15th Century BC Mycenean Greece was of much interest to me. They belong to those things which provide a link among languages of at least two continents, that is to sayl, Asia and Europe if not also Africa or Egypt. As such, these six-time-two inch burnt clay tablets are no less important than the famous Rosetta Stone, which is also in the British Museum as well.

In 1965 two metropolitan boroughs, that is Greenwich and Woolwich, joined together into the present day Greenwich and became a London borough. The Greenwich meridian is the zero line of longitude which passes through the Old Royal Observatory, which was founded by King Charles II in 1675 to give navigational information for sailors. In 1884 the Greenwich Meridian was adopted as international standards of reference. In 1958 after World War II the Royal Greenwich Observatory moved to Herstmonceux Castle, Sussex, and again in 1990 to Cambridge. With it also moved the Greenwich Mean Time. It also operates telescopes on La Palma in the Canary Islands, which include the 165-inch William Herschel commissioned in 1987. Greenwich was designated a World Heritage Site in 1997, Designed by Richard Rogers Partnership who designed the Lloyd's Buildings, the Millennium Dome has a diameter of 1,050 feet, a height 164 feet, an area 19.86 acres and is constructed on the Greenwich Prime Meridian. It was conceived in 1992, opened on 31 December 1999 and partly funded by the lottery funds through the Millennium Commission.

London Underground is the world's first underground rail line. It was opened in 1863, essentially a roofed trench at first.

There are two John's in our Community Action, one is a student whereas the other a staff, and I do not always distinguish one from the other for you here. No, I shall not be the only one to tolerate John's language. So, here you are some of what he wrote to us.

> Two of our vols here attended the launch of the week on Monday at the House Of Commons with MP Paul Boeting - Home Office Minister/Youth. A further 4 vols will also attend the Student Volunteering UK conference this weekend in Liverpool. A couple of vols (Aren't you Rachel and Zoe?!) will blitz the Association today with CA flyers in a bid to attract new vols. Congrats, you guyz, and keep up the good work!!

So there you go, now you understand (why I like (our) CA (this much)).

Sunday 18 February 2001, Yukiko writes again. It has been surprisingly cold in Japan this winter. They have had several snows in Tokyo. She went to Hokkaido to ski, and it was -15 degree and there was even

a wind! She plans to go to Nepal again in 2002 to climb up to Mt. Kala Pattar (5,545 m) from where you get a close view of Mt. Everest. The trip could cost around 400,000 yens. 'But you should go there at all costs', she says.

Monday 26 February 2001, I hope that the new government in Thailand will be able to accomplish what they aim to do during their campaign. The limit for truck in Europe is, I think, 40 tons and in UK about 35. And they are trying to have this limit increased. The highways here are wide and the trucks always go on the leftmost lane. I think Thailand needs more motorways and the elimination of the *mad pills* or Amphetamines by increasing sentences and better policing. They say increasing the tonnage of trucks would reduce intercity traffic.

Sunday 18 March 2001, John wrote to say that this week the Day Care project is going to the Museum of Science and Technology. To see the museum now there is still an entrance fee which by next year will have disappeared. This semester postgraduate seminars tend to be heavily scheduled on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Last week was the first time I could make it to two of them over at the University of Manchester. Some seemingly small things, for example visiting the Manchester Aquatic Centre, could be quite enjoyable for Day Care people as well, and not too demanding. The Mersey River Valley and all the water parks in that area is also a very nice place for a picnic. The Gorton Reservoir is another one. Or we could sit and chat at UMIST. There is a cafe in the Reynold Building and another one in the Staff House that could be a change if we would like to. I do not know why John always ask me for suggestions, for he never follows them.

Exchange Square is so completely transformed I can not remember what it was like before. Now you have a modern open space that invites, refresh and slow down the pace of your life and thought. The water from a fountain that runs through the gaps between rocks which lie on the ground to form a strip, half canal, half underground water; seats that are bogies, placed on tracks on the ground; windmill sails.

On Thursday 22 March I write to Caroline to say that there is absolutely no need to worry. I did not mind not being able to be on SCANC. I agree with her that it needs no treasurer for exactly the same reason you mentioned, that is geographical location. I tell her that I consider myself a professional volunteer, so this is no disappointments. A good thing is that I don't have to be busy. The only reason why I wanted to help was that this year is a Year of Volunteering and I want to devour as much experiences as possible. I may be too busy to help organising next year's conference. They may find defining its roles easier if they replace the name 'SCANC' with some better one, or change the way

people pronounce it.

I fly to on the Malaysian Airline MH11 to Kuala Lumpur and then on MH784 from there to Bangkok, Sunday 25th March. I can collect the miles travelled on a Malaysian Airline flight into my Flying Dutch mileage card of KLM, though it is by no mean the best of such cards. The collected miles seem to disappear into a kind of void from where nothing whatever come out of. When I was in Japan, I flew to Hawaii on a *gratuit* ticket from mileages collected on a Northwest card. An a large part of those came only from the trip I made to the US in June 1996.

Thailand is a land of Buddhism. To me the latter is no religion but a philosophy, and Buddha a philosopher. His teaching predates that of Plato, who was born over a century after he died. It is interesting to note that the toga worn by the Greeks and Romans is very similar to clothes worn by a Buddhist monk, except for the colour which for the former is white while for the latter yellow or orange. Moreover the three languages, namely Pali, Greek and Latin, belong to the same Indo-European family, with words in Pali and Ancient Greek very similar to each other.

For me, a prerequisite of a religion is its being originated from myths which subsequently develop into a philosophy. Thus Christianity, Islam and Judaism are religions, whereas the teachings of both Buddha and Confucius, who was eight years old at the time when Buddha died, have always been a philosophy from the start, and for that very reason are philosophies not religions. It could be because Buddha first taught his findings in India, a country rich of religions among which is Hinduism, that later myths were added in order to turn a philosophy into a religion. I maintain that those later-added myths are faked and unnecessary. The end product being always a philosophy, there is no more need to add them then than there are needs to add yeasts to a baked bread. In the latter case what you want to eat is the bread not the yeast, and similarly in the former the philosophy not the myth. I say that while the yeasts added to a bread may cause indigestion of the stomach, the myths added to a philosophy may cause indigestion of the brain. Myself I have always been an adherent to Buddhism as a philosophy. During 1983 when I have come into contact with Christianity in New Zealand, I started to define myself as a non-religion. Towards the end of 1994 I found God while sitting in my room at the Moberly Hall, reading an English translation of Hugo's *Les Misérables*. From April 2003 I started to pray for people whom I know, and can not stop doing so ever since. I try to be a good Christian who believes in Buddha's philosophy, and I believe in his philosophy because I have found God through his teaching.

In May 2001 I went to Italy and a few other countries. On my way back on the plane I take some slides. We were flying so low. They are slides of the Alps. This is the 19th May 2001 and the plane was British Midland BD472. I like photography, and I used to win prizes in a country-wide competition for slides. There is some problem when I have the slides developed at the shop inside the Manchester Metropolitan University's Student Union. They must have lost a few of my slides, because some of the shots that I can remember vividly are missing. There is no other proofs of course, except my own memory. For all I know, someone in the lab could have thrown them away by mistake. Chris, the manager of the shop, promised to find the missing slides for me. But it turns out that he plays the game of postponing. Day after day in good faith I would visit him at his shop to ask about my slides, but all's in vain.

Today I said that I no longer think or expect to have them back after all the hassles of these three weeks. I want to have the receipt back, that which he had taken from me three weeks ago. I keep records of my travelling and would keep the receipt among my other memorabilia. The more I asks him for it, the more annoyed he seems to become. Then he turns the story around just like that. Now he says that the lab has got it. I tell him I do not think that is the case. It is funny to see how his tone suddenly changes by my merely insisting that I have my receipt back. I tell him that unless he gave the receipt back to me I will complain. He jeers and mocks my words, saying there is no use complaining. 'That receipt belongs by right to the shop,' he says. 'I paid the money,' say I, 'and so I keep the receipt'. I think to myself, 'What ridiculous chap! Even a child knows this much'. It turns out that Chris believes in no customer's rights.

I look around for a policeman, and seeing none I shout, 'Police!, Police!' It must have been a sight. A man taller than myself joins us, and join force in pushing me out of the shop. 'Take your hands off me!', I command, but I must have not sounded convincing enough for they still keep on pushing me. Up to this point, I have unintentionally upset some stationeries from the shelves, and I think I had better leave now lest it escalates into upsetting their persons, which might land me in trouble and does not become a good Christian like me.

> And I called, 'Police!, Police!,'
> but no police was around.
> I called, 'Police!, Police!,'
> but the police was nowhere to be found.

I complain later to Miss Essex who is the President of the MMU's SU, and finally receive a free film with development included. The free film

I take some unimportant pictures in no time, hand it over to them, then keep my fingers crossed waiting and fearing for the worst. This time nothing goes amiss, they have learnt their lessons and I have mine. But a free film is really nothing compared with two of my favourites slides.

Today as I handed in the complaint form the lady at the reception desk, who is otherwise very kind, said to me as she was handing a photocopy of the form to me that she had made a white copy for me and she was going to keep the coloured one for herself, she hoped that I would like the white one. Now, I have no clue why she said that.

Also, I have been a professional volunteer in UK since 1994, not that I am paid for doing what I did. I have been a carer who looked after elderly people and think that I had come to know the good and kind side of the British culture some of the younger generation nowadays might have overlooked. I do not believe in suing. In fact I don't even believe in complaining. But if someone has accused you of something without your knowing it, for example if Chris should have informed the police that I had been wreaking a havoc around out of the blue, then I want to know in order that I can then defend my own name. It is not that I would mind being misunderstood that much. But even though it is certainly best to forgive any people whoever, sometimes you need to be able to stand up and say something for yourself if you would rather not be bullied and then shut up. I want to know what is going on. Such cowardice.

> What man is this who bullies another man?
> He is no man who another man bullies.

The Criminal Investigation Department is the detective branch of the London Metropolitan Police. It was established in 1878. Recruitment is entirely from the uniformed police. In London, a number of detectives are stationed at New Scotland Yard.

Sherlock Holmes is fictitious and a private detective. Detectives normally busy themselves investigating murder. Not all detectives tur out to be a discoverer, but they call them *detective* anyway instead of *investigator*. His narrator is Dr Watson, though both of them are narrated by Arthur Conan Doyle (1859 – 1930) who was Scottish, but whose works are set in Cornwall. Agatha Mary Clarissa Christie (née Miller, 1890 – 1976) also write detective novels. In fact she was such a prolific writer she must have averaged 20 pages a day or something. She created Hercule Poirot and Miss Jane Marple. I like her stories, especially Poirot's ones, but I prefer Holmes. She also wrote under the name Mary Westmacott some romantic novels.

It may be interesting to note that the Leaning Tower of Pisa is famous

not so much for the fact that it leans, but because it tried to correct itself. Or rather, the builders of subsequent periods tried to build the upper floors level while the base of the building was already tilting. Therefore it gives the impression of someone who loses his balance and is about to fall down into a pond, say, but is trying hard to recover his balance and remain on land.

Sunday 10 June 2001, yes, summer is here now. But sometimes it's still cold. Today, for example, it is sunny but yesterday it was windy and cool. Now the night time has shrunken to the extend that we only have the darkness each day from 10 pm to 4 am the following day. One step further and we would have a midnight sun like they do in Norway! My brother emailed to say that the new government seems to be very good and efficient. The only obvious thing the present prime minister of Thailand has in common with myself is that we both have studied all our school years at Montfort College in Chiangmai. His name, *Dakṣiṇ*, is in some transliteration confused with the name *Ṭaksin* of the general who revived Siam after its capital city Àyudhàyạ was sacked the second time by the Burmese. Both are crucial for their country in crisis. I'm glad to hear my brother say that the saving interest of the banks is going to be increased. But this will prove not to be the case. Not much is happening around here since this is the summer holiday. Everyone seems to have left and gone home yesterday. The town has become much more quiet than it usually is. This is truly a university town, after all.

Donna is the first one of my friends at Ashburton College whom I try to get in touch with again. I wrote her a postcard the last time I flew to England, and she answered by email and ask me a typical Kiwi question what I have been up to. I tell her it has been twenty years since the last time I saw her. Briefly speaking I returned from Ashburton College to Montfort College, my high school in Thailand. That was unwise of me, because with my 6^{th} Form Certificate I could have gone to the Chiangmai University to do Astronomy. The following year I was offered a place at an Engineering faculty, but I decided that I wanted to do Medicine. I illegally took the university entrance exam again when I got caught and have all my offers cancelled. But that was all right, since I love Tragedy. I went to Bangkok to do Computer Science at the Open University there. From the that followed onwards I studied at two universities at the same time, namely the Chulalongkorn University and the Ramkamhaeng University, by the end of the period of five more years of which I have obtained two bachelors of engineering, one in Electrical Engineering and the other Mining Engineering, and another bachelor degree in Computer Science. During my study I went once to the UK and again to Budapest for a job training. After I have

graduated, I worked for three years at three different companies, and had become a workaholic. Extremes are not sustainable, however, and that was what happened with me and my attitude towards my career. I left my third job when the Thai economy was at its strongest ever in history, to do a master degree in Manchester, England. Then I went to Japan and did some research there for three and a half years. When I returned to Thailand in 1999, that country's economy was at its lowest ebb ever. The worst thing which I soon came to realise is that the morale amongst the professional population was even worse. They say that lack of courage is contagious, so now I am back in Manchester again for more postgraduate studies.

Benito is our hall of residence's tutor. I write to him complaining the wrong I have experienced from Grosvenor Place in January. After I arrived here in September, I was paying by Direct Debit. For the first few months no money had been taken from my account. Then I received a letter telling me to come to the office to write a cheque because the direct debit was not working. Shortly after I have given them the cheque, the money was withdrawn from my account twice. I was put into overdrawn for months and did not realise it until someone told me there seemed to be some problem in my bank statement. When I started to complain about this, the hall's staffs made me run backward and forward between GP and NatWest, always saying to me the person concerned in this matter was not there. This was a hassle to me, and had wasted much of my time. I had to spend more than the whole week doing that. Then I gave them a letter from the bank which says how much the mistake had caused me in terms of the interests, and told them that the bank had said that there may be some more charges not yet written in this report. The staff said, 'Fine', they would make the reimbursement a little higher than the amount written, then, in order to make sure that it covers everything. But what they did turned out to be contrary to this fine words of promise of theirs, and I found that I had to bear this additional charge myself. 'They are just a bunch of ignorami,' I should have told our tutor, 'The only thing they care about while working in the morning is where they are going to have the lunch, and the only thing in the afternoon is when they can finally go home'. This is why my flat mate Aziz came here loving every breathing creatures, only to go away defeated and thinking that the varsity was racist.

End of June 2001, my sister wrote to say that she had been to a conference in Portuguese, and then again in Chicago. How lucky! In the former buildings are historical, whereas in the latter they are modern, or so she said. I could have guessed that much myself. But it seems to me that I shall have to visit the Art Museum in Chicago sometimes. She

says she is going to open a clinic next month.

All students who come to study in Manchester are at best guaranteed that during their first year here they will have somewhere to live in. So they come here in great number, only to find out that sometimes even this ridiculously generous gesture is forsaken. It is not only the tuition fees but also the rents that rises every year at a hyperbolic rate, one can not help but thinks that those people who, through their calculation somehow arrived at these exaggerated amounts, are from some non-Euclidean space, out of phase with the world we live in. By July 2001 I have already joined all my other flat mates in the attempt of finding the favour from some other landlords apart from the universities' Accommodation Office. And this almost invariably means getting from a boiling pot into a frying pan. I ask Hayley at Jardine for a room at the new Sir Charles Grove Hall of Residence. I ask for a room some floors up, with the window opening towards the east. It will turn out that my room there does have a window, but one which opens towards the south. But by the time I know about this I will have already realised that this is even better, because in the northern hemisphere of this high an latitude the sun only moves about within the bound of the southern half of the sky. So a room whose windows open to the south enjoys the sunlight all day long, whereas rooms in the northern part of the building are forever either cool or damp.

Recently I have had a small problem with my Hotmail address, that is to say, I could not log in to my account. I would like to think that some hackers had been trying to gain the access of it. So I make myself another address, also in Hotmail, and from this new address report the problem to the staffs there. Ken is fine and kicking in Bristol. Not that I have seen him, but he has replied my email. No one could have sounded the way he did. I have a feeling that newspapers in UK is getting less and less interesting to read. But not long ago I read that in Florida there was an uncle who wrestled with a shark his size and rescued his nephew's arm from it's gut! I wonder if you can swim in the sea in Bristol.

In our busy physical world we tend to put off relationships with our virtual friends. Though I know Ken as a person, I can talk with him now only in the virtual reality of the Internet. Cyberspace is the most obvious example of our extended worlds. It is unique in a way because while the telephone and the television, for instance, has no higher a dimension than the dimension of the networks it is built on, the opposite is true for the Internet. That is to say, its dimension is higher, usually much higher than its infrastructure, that is the telecommunication networks on which it sits. By *dimension* I mean the dimension of the simplest of the different possible representations. This is by no means difficult to

see, considering that on one hand the television and the telephone are both hardwares whereas on the other hand the Internet is essentially a software, or rather the space created by the software as such.

Ken has sent a questionnaire, Monday 13th August, intended for people to get to know each other better. The following are the questions followed by the answers he gives. Living arrangement – House share; book you are reading now – Bible; the thing on your mouse pad – A mouse!!!; favourite board game – Chess; favourite magazine – Edge (gamers mag); favourite smells – Most women's perfume, (not too much though); least favourite smells – poo, burnt food; favourite sound – breakbeats; worst feeling – Hurting someone I love; the first thing you think of when waking up in the morning – I need more sleep; favourite colour – Black [of course]; number of rings before you answer the phone – one (if I am close); name of future child – Brandy (girl), markus (boy); most important thing in life – Religion; favourite foods – Fish, chicken; between chocolate and vanilla – Vanilla; whether you like to drive fast – Of course [sic] (I'm a bloke); whether you sleep with a stuffed animal – hell no; whether storms are cool or scary – Both; type of your first car – Mazda 323 GT (da bomb!); ultimate car – Ferrari 360; whom you would meet dead or alive – Jesus; favourite alcoholic drink – Don't drink; your zodiac sign – Virgo; whether you eat the stems of broccoli – Yuk!; what job you would rather have – F1 driver; whether you have ever been in love – Yes; whether the glass is half empty or half full – Half full; favourite movie – The good, the bad and the ugly; whether you type with your fingers on the right keys – No; the thing under your bed – Dirt; favourite number – 9; favourite sport to watch – Football. Approximately a week later I send him my answers, which are the following. The answer for all the questions omitted is 'Not applicable'. Living arrangement – don't know, will have to move soon; book I am reading now – Shakespeare; the thing on my mouse pad – a mouse is on one of them; favourite smells – food; hated smells – most perfumes; worst feeling – sick; the first thing that comes into my head in the morning – where am I; favourite colour – most colours; most important thing – don't know; favourite foods – most foods; between c and v – chocolate; to drive fast – no; sleep with stuffed animal – no, if I could avoid it; whether storms are cool or scary – wonderful; who would you meet alive or dead – none, except God only if I could do so alive; alcoholic drink – table wine; my zodiac sign – scorpio; eat the stems of broccoli – yes; job you would rather have – a professed billionaire without any debt and worries; ever been in love – sadly, yes; empty or full – half empty; type with my fingers on the right keys – half of the time; under my bed – air and carpet; favourite number – odd. I am no longer using the phone, so the number of rings before I

answer one is irrelevant. I should have said that my favourite number is a prime number. Seldom do I answer questionnaires, I tend to think of them as lacking of rooms for the imagination.

I have been busying myself with the translation of papers by Voronoi and Dirichlet into English from the originals in French and respectively German. I write to Sarinthip at the Chulalongkorn University Press about the book and to the National Library in Thailand to ask for an ISBN number, but neither reply. It is going to be an introduction to Voronoi tessellation and a translation of three original and influential papers on the topic by Georges F Voronoi (1868-1908). The papers were published in 1908 and 1909 in the Journal für die reiner und angewandte Mathematik. Voronoi tessellation has found numerous applications, ranging from modelling biological tissues to modelling the structure of galaxy clusters. I intend to make it a book for anyone who is interested in geometry as well as for researchers, both academic and industrial.

I must be a very disorganised person for hardly do I ever get anything done. There is no use trying to plan to improve. The only way possible is to do it.

I feel that summer is already gone. We have some rain and fluctuation in temperature. Then one day it becomes sunny again. A friend of mine who came from Germany believes it is still mid summer, and complains because it is raining which he thought unbelievable, and I shall not argue. He has a very likeable character, must be because he has lived in New Zealand, which is already rare here in Manchester. The city has been growing so fast during the previous years it must be difficult to keep everything in order. This is another side of the coin about growth. I have been reading books on mathematical puzzles and astronomy both subjects of which I really enjoy. The newspapers here can make themselves inviting when they have a mind to. There are always repeated themes, namely those that sell and, worse than this, those that keep on repeating those that sell. Some of these themes are sex scandals or murder or both, fashion, travel and reviews of books and movies. Someone complains why there are no articles reviewing philosophical ideas.

Now I no longer enjoy reading the way I used to do. I can remember reading every word of the translated Hugo's *Les Miserables* and Gaarder's *Sophie's World.* I wish there will be time when I could delve into Literature and Astronomy and Philosophy.

When we are busy and happy, time passes by so quickly that we have trouble remembering when things happened. Charlie writes on 26$^{\text{th}}$ August. He is as usual busy tracing and keeping in touch with all his and Jeanette's relatives, which now have come to include cousins of their

parents. They plan to have a family reunion in two years time, and have issued a family newsletter. Both have recently had *the cold with the 100 day cough.* Both he and Jeanette went to the same primary school. Jeanette's parents shifted from the neighbouring district to their new farm at Isla Bank in 1951. One of his teachers taught Charlie during 1946 – 1950 and Jeanette during 1951 and 1952. He loves music and poetry. It is through his insistence that all his students use descriptive English that Charlie now likes to write. 'There is no places for excellence in marks,' he used to say, 'for there are always scopes to improve'. He is now 88, his wife 82 and his sister has recently passed away who was 90. Spring has finally come in New Zealand. The light now comes at about 6 am and darkness 6:30 pm. Their Bed and Breakfast business is going steadily. Its time for Charlie to plant thousands of plants again.

There is a lifetime to spare for what you love doing. I can be very stubborn at times, and I am not going to give up my studying this time. There is nothing like Manchester. When I was doing my M.Sc. here in 1995 I thought there was nowhere as sombre as the town. But now we have traffic jams of up to a mile long all over the place. This is also literally a very gay city, this is now 29 August 2001. The Gay Village here has a madigras every year, and this year it was on Saturday. On Monday there was a huge Good Year advertising balloon circling the sky and we had a perfect weather. I stood and watched the balloon and marvelled at the technology of mankind when it was a Late Summer Holiday in UK. I knew then only that this was a holiday. Then I asked Dmitris, one of my flat mates who comes from Greece and he said that Napolean was killed by a British on that day. I believed him at that time, but afterwards realised that Napolean died in prison, poisoned until he was very sick. I tend to believe people too easily, but have now come to my own conclusion that the Late Summer Holiday is the last Monday of August. Newspaper here can be very educating. It was only last week that I came to notice the difference between the meaning of the words *deprived* and *depraved.* I normally read the whole article first and then, if it is interesting, do some research later so as to understand it better. There is no need to agree with the author first to be able to appreciate his writing.

Oftentimes I help people without intending to, while equally often intending to but could do nothing that helps. Yet another flat mate of mine who comes from Pakistan left his M.Sc. study suddenly in May, broken within. It is difficult to find out what has actually happened from the account given by someone so disturbed as he was then, but I could gather from his side of story that he felt he was being prejudiced at. As I knew he was a gentle person, in my letter written to one of

the tutoring staffs to complain about some other things I alluded to his unexplainable departure. Two weeks ago I met him back again at the hall of residence. He told me that his tutor wrote and asked him to come back to finish his study. He asked me whether I had written to his tutor because it was mentioned that I had. But I said 'No' without waiting for another word. Sometimes you know when someone is more good intentions than prudence. I would rather not know what, if anything, has happened behind the scene. I hope that with this experience he will be able to guard himself from another such bout of depression. In short, his was as a remarkable as unexpected a story. Among those in our flat who seem to care are Javier from Spain, Dmitris from Greek and Dirk from Germany and myself. None of our Chinese flat mates did.

If you ever wondered about the plenitude of people in our flat. Bill told me that the law in Britain only allows flats to share one cooker among at most four persons. Ours has fourteen members but only one cooker. Myself, I would count the four hobs and an oven together as one cooker. But I guess one could perhaps argue that in our case we have five cookers altogether. Only then would it not be against the law in our flat.

When the WTC buildings in New York came down, I was busy in Bangkok publishing the book *Voronoi translated.* After I have come back to Manchester, Ken writes one day to say that on the Microsoft Words you may want to try typing in 'Q33 NY', the flight number of one of the aeroplanes that crashed into the building. Then if you change the font size to 26 and then change the font to Wingdings, you will see the foreboding message. If this were no coincidence, then whoever had planned the bombs is an expert in Microsoft products and fonts.

The Royal Northern College of Music is offering scholarships to students of my university to study music with their teachers. I apply, but nothing comes of it. I learnt the recorder and the trumpet with Antonio, the piano with Giṛiḅuṇ, Chan and his mother, the violin with Mr. Slade and the music theory with Chan and then Vicki. In the early 1980s in the piano exams by the Trinity College of Music I passed Grade IV with honour and then Grade V, and I also satisfied all the requirements for the School Certificate and the University Entrance Accreditation in New Zealand. I played the trumpet in the brass band at Montfort College and the violin in the school orchestra at Ashburton College, and I sang tenor for both the Bangkok Music- and the Bangkok Choral Societies. I want to become a concert pianist and to learn everything related to the piano. But my qualifications above are not enough, for example they seem to require that you passed at least Grade VIII for your instrument from the Trinity College. These exams are expensive and you probably

have to be trained by a coach to pass them. I read the piano profusely but hardly memorise, that is the trouble with me. I read at the piano as reading a book, not as doing a recitation. This is an age of performers and recitals, not one of reading at sight and composers. I am really hunger for knowledge and even want to compose. But anyway none of these requires the attachment with the RNCM, so at least I can do it on my own now.

I have been thinking about having some dried foods sent over from Thailand to sell to Thai shops here. But the cost is horrendously expensive if you do it through the post office, so the idea needs to be dropped for the moment. It is also difficult to find a partner in Thailand to help you do the job.

Charlie has written again. He can write so vivid a description of things. I have to try hard not to copy his words verbatim. With the coming of spring we realise just how powerful are the forces or the God that controls the universe. The terrorist attacks in Manhattan remind us that men are still barbarous, and our savage experiences like those of the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on 6 and respectively 9 August 1945, have taught only some but have set an example for others and the maniacs. Most rich people have an obsession with money, but to Charlie friends are more precious than gold or gems. 'It is so important to have work that you are happy doing', he concludes.

One Saturday Mokoto and Kumiko come to visit me at Sir Charles Grove. I meet them at noon at the gate of Grosvenor Place. We have a quick lunch together when I put some cheese on toasts in the oven. Then we go out for a walk. We follow the Oxford Road, then I lead the way off to the left. But when I turn right to enter a path under the trestle, both of them hesitate, uncertain what to do but finally follow. The path leads from the street to the Rochdale Canal. The walk along the canal to Castle Field is pleasant. It is no longer dangerous to walk here nowadays. In Castle Field a large framework is set up and fenced off on which people play the snowboard on artificial snow. There is a slope that leads very high up to a point that looks eerie and fearsome. Tickets are sold and the area is heavily fenced off, so that you could see nothing much from the outside. We walk around the place, stopping at the Roman remains site, the Tourist Information Centre and then the Youth Hostel where we stay for a while. Mokoto is going to Spain during the Christmas holidays and wants to find out about the accommodation. In the evening we walk along the streets back to my place. We all enjoyed our walk. Both Kumiko and Mokoto have been in Manchester a year, and yet most of the places we have been today are new to them. Back at home both cook me a superb dinner, and we sit down together and

talk for a long time. Both of them study Linguistics at the University of Manchester, and Kumiko learns German.

Also studying at the University of Manchester is Ùm who also works for two hours everyday at Kim, a grocery owned by a Thai lady in the China Town. She has some problems with her supervisor and wants to move to the Huddersfield University or some other. Yukari had introduced me to the *Howard's End* by E. M. Foster, and I read it. I introduced it to Kumiko, and she has recently bought a collection of Foster's short stories from a second-hand book market.

The news of a possible attack to the Golden Gate Bridge seems to me a hoax. So soon after the tragic event in Manhattan it would be imbecile of anybody to plan such a thing, let alone to announce it all over the place like this. I agree with Charlie when he says that the essence of terrorism is its fear and unpredictable nature. But strategically speaking, it has always been the US who needs to attack the Middle East as quick as possible in order to command the oil price, an essential thing if it wants to keep all its fifty States together and to maintain its influence on the world. He may think USA is less popular the further east you go, but I feel that the worst, or the best for that matter, of their critics are Europeans. And you had better heed them even if you do not believe in them, because they have at least culture what the people in the US lack. I often wonder why the US are so different from the EU, considering that both speak very similar languages. The profundity of the people is influenced much by the cultural heritage of its *environs*. The only heritage which matters for USA is the Wild West, and plenty of gold in the rivers did little helps in bringing up the countries as children. Their acronyms say all, that is the closed former *us* and the fraternal latter *you*. USA is plural, UK and EU are both singular. It is strange but true, if one argue by the logic of the Anti Trust Law then the Federal Government of the US should never exist.

You learn all about a country and its culture better when you live there. But the nature of its people is best shown when people from that country either are abroad as a tourist or live overseas, and the smaller the group the better. Thus you see how Japanese people can be polite, eccentric and honest at the same time, or how the Americans have the demanding ways and superior attitude. Conventional education plays some role in shaping our thoughts and opinions, but it is education in a much wide sense, that lifetime education some calls experience, which decides who we are. Education is best when it provides all the many different philosophies as materials, equips you with the analytical and mathematical tools, and then lets you explore and reason. Federalism is no nationalism, it is more like a brain-wash.

Charlie has many American friends, but even he could not help wondering if all wars are about money and oil. 'They all seem to centre around those places where oil is found,' he says. Indiscriminate terrorism is scary. It is more difficult to defend oneself than to attack someone. The best defencive move is always an attack or a counter-attack. This is perhaps why the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbour. A kamikaze veteran gave his view to a newspaper that it is only those people who had never been in a war, who criticise the suicide-bombings. Well, then I pray to God I that I never find myself in a war. Terrorism is a vicious cycle. It leads nowhere, and because of this it escalates. God granted, the Iran Curtain, for instance, may not replace the Iron Curtain.

The gardens that Charlie have been doing are beautiful this year. There has been only a little rain and no wind. With no storms, the tulips flowered for three or four weeks this year. The cherry blossom trees have been in flower for more than eight weeks, and the magnolias are magnificent. They are renovating their home. Southland and Invercargill is booming. There are jobs available everywhere, and the publicity campaign here has gone country wide with considerable success. Farm land prices have escalated.

It is easier to go for a walk on your own than to try to do it together with your girlfriend. For one thing there is no need to wait for her to have time for you, for another only then can you be totally relax and able to reflect. A woman is homely, so she never enjoy the different surroundings as much as she does the people around her. And she is worldly, so she probably would never understand stare into an empty space even when you may feel yourself one with God and Universe. Kumiko said she is busy, so I walk to the Farmers' Market one Saturday. There are farmers from the countrysides who come here to sell their products, which include cheese, preserved foods and meat. It is but a small market with some ten different stalls.

I have applied for a post doing a postdoctoral research at the Department of Physics and Astronomy at the Jodrell Bank Observatory, where I will be studying Active Galaxies if successful. But no replies come back, and after a while I know that my application is again binned.

As New Zealand is heading out of a winter we are heading into one. So far we have had only one or two bouts of very cold days. We have had a very blue sky today, but towards evening it got quite cold. Today I went to two concerts, both were by students who are professionals, and both were free. The first one was a Lunch Time concert at my university UMIST where students from the Royal Northern College of Music sometimes pay us a visit playing. Today's program was a piano and cello duet by Brahm, Op. 99, and for the encore we had an incidental

piece by a 20th century Italian composer whose name which I had written down is not very familiar to me. The pianist, who was from Korea, were fine but keep rotating his body while playing too much, which is not the first thing to do when playing accompaniment. The celloist was of darker complexion and rose to the occasion once properly warmed up, ie 3rd movement or so. To sum up, the concert was enjoyable though one does not learn much watching.

The second concert was all organ musics. Altogether five organists played, among whom the second one was the best in that he brought out from a polyphony in all its complexity, its fundamental simplistic nature. And this, he was able to bare out before the audiences almost the way Beethoven does. The many lines become as many voices independent from, and talking to one another. The technical ability of all the five organists must be pretty much the same, but I only learnt from the one I mentioned.

Gaby writes on Tuesday 23 October 2001 to say that Dublin is great. She says that even though it is very crowded with cars and people, there are lovely little corners. 'And the dubliners are really friendly!', she adds. I had written to her a few days ago when I told her that I plan to visit Ireland and Scotland sometimes towards the end of next year. She thinks that the west coast of Ireland should be nice to visit because it is always recommended to her. She is currently working on a parallel corpus, and use it to do some stylistic studies.

Americans were like gods to a Thai before we started to have bad experiences with them. Before I went to New Zealand, that is, I used to have the same idea. American's defeat in Vietnam was seen as being tragic and sad. All Vietnamese has been portrayed to us as being a close equivalent to evils. The closest you can get to an English language school in Chiangmai in 1982 was the American University Alumni. American language was taken for granted as being the English language. Sixth Form English changed all that. It was the first time that I have heard some one criticise *American involvements*. At first I wondered why the world of literature should question Americans, something you never did in Thailand, when all it ever tried to do was eliminating evils. 'Of course,' I thought, 'you kill bad people, all of them if possible. My 6th Form English teacher may seems to be wise, but he doesn't know the truth who has never lived next door to an evil before'. But then again, most of the other things he told me were true. So in the end I was forced to have another think about it to see who could possibly go wrong in his analysis. I came to the conclusion that it was either I or the rest of my class whose notation was wrong. Now I see it as American Imperialism. By this I mean the forcing of one's value upon other people

as contrasted with giving education to them so that they may learn to think for themselves. All good teachers do that, even or if it means that their students may refute their ideas.

I am all for 'Long live the media', but I think at times it shapes our ideas too much in a wrong way. The portrait of America is all President Bush's angry name-callings and bragging. Here I have used the word in the American sense, for I have been told by someone from the office of international trading from Pittsburgh to whom I once listen at a conference, that 'to brag' in American English is considered normal and polite. 'There you go !,' I thought, 'How much of the misunderstanding in this world could have been from nothing other than the difference in the languages'. This is especially true for the two languages which look deceivingly similar otherwise, as an example consider Portuguese and Spanish. The media is biased and shows only the angry side of the US, seldom those peaceful anti-war demonstrations there. On the other hand a demonstration of a few Pakistanis obtained a satellite priority, but those ones with banners 'We support jihad against illiteracy' would probably never be broadcasted anywhere. Terrorists have to be busted but not bombed. Terrorism has no head as such. The worst threat of terrorists is for moderate Muslims. Muslim fundamentalism also follows certain philosophers in a similar way that communism believes in Karl Marx. They also have disciples as communism has Stalin, Lenin and Mao. The immediate threat, however, is always to those closer at home. Fundamentalists believe it is their duty to purify the Muslim faith, and their target is therefore those whom they call *degenerate Muslims*. Not all terrorists are fundamentalists. Some only respond to Israel's attacks and try in vain at parring the score. Immediate self-defence as a reflex action is like naturally occurring events or accidents. It is relevant to no moral standards, because it comes from the sub-conscious mind. But a planned-out murder is another thing, and is a misuse of the word *self-defence*.

The first thing terrorists want to see is an overt military action, as England must have known well from experience. Why America will not support the peace process in Israel, which seems to be a good thing to do, is beyond me. They could also easily help improve the education of the Afghans. After all they had been useful earlier when Red Russia was still in power against whom the US had to have someone to fight for them. However bombing a country to catch a person may seem obviously preposterous to a child, that is exactly what they would like to have us believe that we are trying to do. Praque and Dresden could have done without it. Both Hiroshima and Nagasaki should have been two of the worst of war crime cases in which those who made the decision should

have been put on trial. I speak not to disprove this lack of trials, because life is never fair. In Thailand both of my parents remember bombings vividly through the eyes of a child. The fact that one bomb might hit a target hardly justify the other 99 which must necessarily drop on the wrong places. Unlike trying to hit a missile by another missile in the Star War test, this is no test.

My new hall of residence has made so many mistakes. They had made another one again. The kitchen table is fixed to the wall and runs along the whole length of it. But it was built three inches too low, so the fridge and the freezer could not fit in underneath it. Yesterday they had cut the table in half and raised one half up to accommodate these.

Saturday 1st December 2001, there is an International Seasonal Celebration at the RNCM. It is nice concert and at the end there are minced pies and mulled wine. There are some fifty singers and a number of musicians. Poetries and extracts from a novel by Charles Dicken are read. One first year student from Macedonia reads a poem in Macedonian alternately with the translation in English read by another person. A student from Ireland sang a sad song in Irish the the piano accompaniment. Another student sang a song in what I think is one of the languages of the former Eastern Europe countries. A first year student from China played a 2,000 year old Wu Zhen. It is a kind of table harp with a nice sound that reminds me of something I had read in the translated Taiwanese novels some twenty years ago when I was a child. I hope these musicians are taught western musics while they are here, instead of only performing what they have brought with them and being looked at as mere curiosities. I hope professional musicians know better than I do.

Monday 3rd December, Charlie writes. Next year he will be qualified for pension. He complains about the commercialism associated with Christmas and about the deprivation of the world. The world is full of covetings and killings, while everywhere people say that they are Christians, Muslims, or some other religions none of which promotes these. In New Zealand the climate is now becoming more temperate. Formerly warm areas are now prone to drought, and there are more rains in Auckland now than in the Southland. The petunias, begonias and pansies that are among over 7,500 plants he has planted are now in flower. People he know start to die off one after another. 'Life is definitely in two parts,' he says, 'the physical and the spiritual'.

Friday 18 January 2002, an email from Charlie. Christmas has always been linked with giving since the three wise men came to visit the infant Jesus with gifts. People now commercialise this to an indecent degree. We search for profits from everything. He is worrying about

the economics well-being of both the US and Japan, and the effect of these on the world's economics. But I believe that neither of them could be in a recession for long because, with their distributed governments, the structures of both are too robust for that. One may represent a country as a network. Then the network's structure is more important than its transient indicators. I risk being thought of as blaming the victim in place of the culprit when I say that the Thai economy came down in 1997 not because of the attack on the Thai baht by George Soros, a Hungarian-American and owner of a powerful hedge fund in the US, but it came down because Thailand was structurally weak and had too many unnoticed or hidden problems. Thus the Thai economy came down *when* Soros' hedge fund attacked us, but it came down *because* of our own structural weaknesses. The same thing would have to happen anyway, around the same time as it did. According to the percolation theory, when a network is ripe, ready to undergo a change in phase, there are always several possible triggering events any one of which may do the job equally well. In other words if it were not the hedge fund, it would have been something else, *but*, and this is important, *the time will not be far off.*

I work as a Library Representative of the Joule Library at UMIST, so my email address is on the mailing list to answer all students' suggestions. In January Jenny writes to report that she could not find one past examination paper on the Library's website. And then Richard writes to complain that we do not support good web browsers, only the Microsoft Internet Explorer which is no good. He suggests that we add to the existing MS products the new Netscape 6.2 and Opera 6.0. Around five years ago most people used Netscape 4.6, until MS started to force people to use their product, he says.

Dirk come to visit this evening. We sit in the kitchen drinking some coffee. I introduce him to Aspasia and they exchange addresses. He wants to learn Greek because he has a Greek girlfriend, and she knows where to find a good teacher.

I went swimming again today. I planned my time such that I would be swimming until it was time for everyone to get out of the water for half an hour. So that while swimming I would not have to look around for a clock the time of which I would not have been able to read anyway. Hovering high on one side of the pool is an electronic billboard facing a spectator stand on the opposite side. Everything including this and the whole swimming pool is indoor. On the ground floor there is a 50-metre swimming pool, a diving pool with its 10-metre diving platform, and sliding tubes.

Winter is practically gone. In a few days' time it will be Candlemas,

and it would be interesting to see how the winter here will be like next year. It is generally believed that if the weather is fine on that day, that is 2nd February, then winter will come again, otherwise it will disappear and there will be no winter next year.

It is no longer cold now. The winter this year has been very warm, too warm that sometimes it was like a summer. Homeless people do not suffer as much as they did last year, and that is a good thing for them. February is a nice time. Tomorrow it is Candlemas, 14th Valentine, and the Chinese New Year is sometime after that, though I do not know when. Life is too short.

The last time I went back from New Zealand to Japan I stopped at Cairns and unintentionally tried the diving. The first time I dive we met a big reef shark at close range and I said to myself that I would never again dive, but the following day found me did it again. The Australian marketing was that good! I think I will never again do that kind of thing. My time in Thailand was at times almost unbearable, but it could have been worse. It had been a good experience all the same. I should have learnt something from it, though I have yet to find out what that something is. The street of Manchester is much safer now than what it was five years ago, thanks to the installation of all the CCTV cameras and the injection of funds to the city by the present Labour government. Historically speaking, this had been the heart of the Labour Movement and the Industrial Revolution.

Some of the websites I have suggested to friends overseas are

`www.britishcouncil.org.uk`, `www.iasuk.org`, `www.jcwl.org.uk`, `www.dfee.gov.uk/ols`, `www.ukcosa.org.uk`, `www.embassyweb.com`,`prospects.ac.uk`, `www.manchester.com`, `www.manchesteronline.co.uk`, `www.commonwealthgames.com/`, `www.umist.ac.uk` and of course `manchesteraquaticscentre.com` .

The BBC seems like a great company to work for. Their team seems to have only young people. It is amazing to sea how efficient these people of the generation younger than us work, and to think how through their works they could influence the world. Their training program for new employees seems sound. It teaches people to be objective and unbiased. It was founded in 1922 as the British Broadcasting Company, and became Corporation in 1927.

There are very few scholarships here which are available for overseas students. Most of them would require either a UK or an EU citizenship. And the fee for overseas students is decidedly expensive. Firstly, in order to get into a university you need to apply and then be offered a

place at the university. Ideally you should carefully read and then try to satisfy all the requirement criteria of the course you are applying for and of the university you are applying to. In practice, however, this may not be the case. Sometimes it is all right even if you only satisfy some of these requirements. Tuition fee in the UK is quite expensive for a European standard. Even local students complain and protest. For overseas students, Thailand and all the Commonwealth countries included, it is approximately three times higher than what the local students have to pay, which makes it about £9,000 a year. The cost of accommodation is a bit more than one third of that amount, that is about £3,300 a year. Your Student Visa is for the first arrival trip only. Once landed, you get another stamp on your passport which you use for the rest of your stay. It entitles you to unlimited number of entries. This is an improved procedure which benefits students from Thailand, as compared to the one in use in 1994.

Style and hospitality varies from one town to another. Generally speaking, most of the so-called 'university towns', for example Cambridge, Oxford, Manchester, and London, are nice place to live in. Sometimes a city changes. For example, Manchester in 1995 was a very run-down town, but now in 2001 it is very vibrant. In this case it has completely changed and there is going to be a Commonwealth Games here next year.

Master degree in UK is a one-year course. MBA is a taught course, where you study for 9 months and then do a research project for the rest of the course. By contrast, MPhil and PhD are courses by research with neither lectures nor exams. PhD is either a three year course or a two year one if you could convince the university that it is related to your master degree's work. You can also study part-time. A 3-year PhD course becomes a 5-year one if you do it part-time. Websites of university are generally in the form `www.<name>.ac.uk`, where `<name>` is the name of the university, for example *sussex* (U. of Sussex), `ox` (Oxford), `cam` (Cambridge), `edinburgh` (U. of Edinburgh), `bristol` (U. of Bristol), `london` (U. of London), `kent` (U. of Kent), `hull` (U. of Hull), `le` (U. of Leicester), `wmin` (U. of Westminster), `aberystwyth` (U. of Aberystwyth, in Wales), and `bangor` (U. of Bangor).

I have found a system of romanised Thai alphabet, and yet another system of romanised Lanna alphabet, the latter one being my true mother tongue. Peter of the translation group might not realise that one of our earlier talks helped catalysed an idea that had been forming in me for at least three years, and which percolated during the New Year vacation.

Each of the these two systems is simple, aesthetic, and provide an

exact one-to-one mapping of the scripts into romanised alphabet. Hitherto the Thai one has been deemed impossible, while the Lanna one would no doubt have been likewise, were it not for the fact that it had been suppressed all along due to some past political reasons and only ten years ago had been considered an endangered language. I feel that I am up to anything now regarding these two systems. They are now ready to be scrutinised by any scholar of Thai, Lanna, or even Pali and Sanskrit. These four languages I just mentioned join with one another into a single cluster before my eye.

Though I have solved this particular problem, the more general problem which is in fact a pet project of mine still remain. This is namely how to provide a roman writing system to all the various languages that have not yet got one. Peter asked me a question. He wanted to know where he could find a grammar book for Lanna. Of course no such books exist in the roman alphabet he could read. Even I, myself a Lanna, can not read my own mother-tongue's alphabet well enough to read a book! Moreover, or because of this, no one has written such books. So I decide to write one.

To me, a language is becoming extinct also when there is no way you could write it down correctly. In the case of Lanna, its system of writing had been falling out of use and there is nothing to replace it with. But now the situation has been reversed, and the Lanna script is making its way back. There is no longer any need for the romanised system of writing like the one I have discovered except (and this is more important in my point of view) in the study of language families.

Even though Lanna is a sister language of Thai, they are different. For one thing, since the Tonal Split which occurred sometimes during the middle period of Ȧyudhȧyạ the number of tones in the former has become six, whereas that in the latter is five. In theory you could write Lanna using the Thai alphabet quite easily. But several complications hinder this. One of these is the following. Both Lanna and Thai divide their alphabet into three groups, namely high, middle and low. And their alphabets are mostly the same or similar. But each often puts the same alphabet into a different group from the other. Seriously this is confusing. For example, you may write the word 'pen', which approximately means *to be*, is a word in both languages, and you may easily write the Lanna word using the Thai script. But if it is in a Lanna context, you pronounce it not as you would have had it been written as *pén* in Thai. This is because the alphabet *p* is in Thai a Middle Consonant while in Lanna it is a High Consonant. Seriously, this is so strangely confusing. And the normal practice when people write Lanna using the Thai alphabet is that they change the original spelling into *pén* to facilitate the

pronunciation. This is a serious crime to the grammar. On top of this, as a rule, the spelling *pén* in Thai implies that the word is definitely not of the Tai language family origin. In other words, if you write Lanna using the Thai alphabet and change the tonal symbols to facilitate the reading, then it would seem as though they were unrelated languages. In Thai, for the Middle Consonants (say *p*), only *pen*, *pěn* and *pèn* can be Thai in origin. *Pēn* is either a foreign word or onomatopoeia, while *pén* is definitely foreign.

In order to be able to write a grammar book on the Thai language using romanised alphabet, one need to have the transcription system in question first. This is what simply does not exist, not only for Thai but also for Lanna and all the other languages within the Tai family. This is also the case with Chinese and Japanese. Except Japanese, all these languages are tonal. Moreover, in the case of languages based on the Chinese characters, the numerous amount of characters, thousands of them, makes possible only a romanised pronunciational transcription not a truly romanised writing system. In the case of Thai, where there are many alphabet having the same sounds, where vowels are numerous and where there are many exceptions in the pronunciation, such a romanised writing system has usually been deemed impossible.

Early on this year I have found a solution to the problem which I think is the best I have ever seen so far. I have tested it rigorously for Thai and have convinced myself that it works well there. I have extended it to Lanna, and it seems to work well there too. I have adapted it for both Japanese and Chinese, and now think that it is highly possible to develop these further into systems which give a one-to-one mapping from these scripts to a romanised one. There are still more work to be done, if only for the reason of the shear number of their characters. For a number of reasons, Japanese has proved to be much more difficult to tackle than Chinese.

The systems I had designed for Thai and Lanna are based on the Pīn Yīn system, the romanised systems for Pali and Sanskrit, a small part from the writing of German, and the rest I myself have designed. Pīn Yīn was developed in Russia, and it is used in China now. Both Pali and Sanskrit have a perfect romanised system because they belongs to the same Indo-European family as Latin. My aim is for systems that not only work, but also give a likeable result.

I think that all languages in the world form clusters. It is not difficult to imagine such clusters or groups of languages. One might ask what are the things which bind languages within the same cluster together, and an answer may possibly be their ancestral history. Languages will form clusters differently depending on which criteria we think binds them

together. I choose the sharing of a common or similar writing system as the criteria. One example is that while Russian and Greek seem so different from English, even though both of them are also Indo-European languages, Hungarian seems more familiar and easier to read, despite the fact that it belongs to a completely different family. In Asia and Europe there are three major clusters, namely Indo-European, Chinese, and Tai. To the Indo-European group belong most languages of Europe and India, and Iranian. To the Chinese cluster belong Chinese, Japanese, and Korean, while to the Tai cluster Thai, Lanna, and many other languages including Ahom which is now extinct. The transcription systems which I have designed will help bringing these languages together, make the transfer of knowledge and experience among them easier, create a better understanding among different cultures, and finally lead us closer to the globalisation of our world. After Japanese and Chinese, I also plan to develop romanised writing systems for every language within the Tai family.

I develop these systems along side with macros on TEX. This is the experimental grounds on which I test their applicability and feasibility. From this macros, in turn, arise yer other systems of lower levels which make it possible for one to write all the writing systems mentioned above by using only standard ASCII characters. In other words, created as a by-product of these macros which I develop are another group of writing systems which can be used to write on normal emails while retaining, by ways of representing accents and tonal marks with certain characters, the exact meaning of the original text. Admittedly these still seem to be far-fetched and have a somewhat alien look. But to me they look the least alien among the other similar efforts I have ever seen. Moreover, they are easy to comprehend and as easy to use as Pin Yin.

As an outline, my project will be about networks and percolation. My works on the transcription systems fit in because of the introduction I make of the coordination number of a language. This number represents the number of connections between one language to the other languages, and can be raised as a result of the systems of transcription developed. This fits in with the context of graph theory. Higher coordination numbers mean higher connectivities. This idea of connectivity and coordination number can also be applied to other things in language study. A word can have more than one meaning. If one consider words as sites, and the same meanings between them bonds within a network, then the number of bonds leading away from each site represents its coordination number, and therefore is the coordination number of the word that site represents. On the other hand one may think of two different groups of sites, one representing the words while the other their abstract

meanings. Then the sites can be mapped between the two groups. This is similar to the previous case, except that here each site in the second group replaces the various bonds that have a duplicate meaning in the former case. Since sites in the second group are abstract ideas, their identity has to be written in the form of definitions.

Related to my work on the Voronoi networks, I have translated three long seminal essays by G. F. Voronoi, as well as a shorter one by G. L. Dirichlet, on the subject and had it published as a book in Thailand under the title *Voronoi Translated.* The first three are translated from French, while the last one from German into English. The originals were written between late 19^{th} and early 20^{th} Centuries. Mathematics is the subject that I enjoy translating in particular, not only because of the cheat it allows, for all the formulae only need to be copied as is, but also because it is a subject that remains for a long time, thousands of years that is. And I hope some of the books I write may last that long even after I am already gone.

Christmas and New Year are gone, and with them the snow on the ground. For the latter I am glad because the snow we have always melts and then refreezes, which makes the ground slippery. This year it always snowed when I was not looking. Aspasia says there has been a record snow in Athens from where she has just returned, which surprises everybody. She dislikes the USA so much you would not believe. I agree with her in most points, but say that I still love them so much. Theirs are magnificent States with magnificent national parks. I suggest that she go there one day, and that she head for the national parks and stick to them not to the cities.

If we are what we read, then I know not why there are so many different opinions and ideas in this world. We all read books written in English or some other languages. These books must have been read by other people too. And yet we never agree with each other. But of course, this is obvious, for two books never agree with each other.

My correspondence with Charlie has always been educating. I learn a lot about life from reading his letters. Some of the things that one learns takes some time to be absorb. The subconscious mind digests and works on them.

> Have a nice time camping!
> Manchester is all right.
> Let me know when you are coming
> here. Chinese New Year,
> yes!, it's the year of the Horse
> again. I was born on such a year.

Then it will be St. Valentine's day. How nice!
Spring is here, how nice!
And I am glad to be
talking with you, even though by emails.

If I were interested in learning languages, I would get some books from the library and start reading them. One thing I like about Japan is the quality of the public libraries there. There you learn a lot from books available from the library closest to your home. Plato is a must. Of course, you should also read other things. Get yourself a copy of Euthrypho, preferably with the original in Greek, and you are well on your way towards understanding many other things. Advices are advice. One is free, of course, to find good books by trials and errors. Nothing wrong about that. That is exactly what I do anyway.

I have been reading books on Cosmology, and have come across some works by Frederick Hoyle (1915 – 2001). He explained the origin of all elements in the universe, an immensely amazing feat, but William Fowler got the Nobel Prize for the work. However he was knighted in 1972, and that is nobler. I also read books on Mathematics, in particular Geometry. I am investigating the Voronoi network and therefore need to know more about three-dimensional polyhedra.

It is now Sunday 10^{th} February 2001. I have not written much to Graham for months, trying to solve all the problems by myself. I decide that I should write to him more often. As far as I am concerned, Leo has been anything but straight-forward in our correspondences for months. From Graham's retirement until and even now I have been working on the assumption that everything he says is from him. But when he said even in our first meeting that I would get nowhere in my PhD if I followed your existing plan, I was flabbergasted. He subsequently asked me to provide him with codes for calculating all the interactions acting on the particles, and he will provide the code for visualisation part. I thought I had better visualise it myself using Matlab's M-scripts, once the crucial virialisation part is done. He believed it would do me well to work on a zeolite problem, which he said Stuart was interested in. He thought this is the same as placing cubes randomly, a problem which turned out to be that of percolation of cubes in continuum, whose 2-d presentation in turns is that of squares in continuum. I solved the 2-d case for n-gons. I told him how I did it, saying that it was possible to carry on in the same line to 3-d, computationally as well as analytically, which I want to do next. I was surprised when he told me the following week to abandon the project, saying that he had already given the same problem to someone else to do. This was before Christmas of last year. The way I solved the 2-d case above is very beautiful. I wanted to show it to Graham but he

never had time. I like to call it 'revolving stars' or sometimes 'dancing stars'.

Just before last week I told Leo how I would tackle problem filtration problem. There have been much works which assume particles to be spherical. I want to allow for any shapes of the individual particle, and to use empirical data to shape the statistical appearance of these particles. I want to use sparse matrices. I will keep only two layers of data at all partitioning surfaces, namely one layer for each side of the boundary, in order to minimise memory space. These two layers will give me enough information on which direction the particles are heading.

I do not think that the randomness assumption applies to crystallised structures like those of minerals and zeolites. The reason is that there are crystals which take more than 100 parts before it repeats itself, and this is only in 2-d and which I have realised using a program which I have written myself. And I have heard that there are some with a number in excess of 1000. I think quantum mechanics plays a role in case of crystals. A stronger reason supporting this assertion is the very existence of pseudo-crystals, those which never repeat themselves. Necessarily from the working of these, as well as those periodical units of monstrous size already mentioned, it is empirically evident, therefore, that crystallisation is a non-local process. In other words, there must be some kinds of distant coordinations or quantum superpositions involved here, as an example you can compare what I say above with Penrose's works on the same topic.

Some people are a bane to those who have ideas different from theirs. 'That is too simple an idea,' he would always say. Or else it would be, 'Somebody must have already done it,' and then, 'therefore it will never be originally yours'. More likely he would say, 'It is not such a great idea', and you know immediately that he believes it. 'You are wasting your time,' he would keep on repeating, and you could not help but agree with him that you have been wasting your time, indeed, talking to him. My TEXniques is somewhat better now, so I feel that I should be able to write my thesis wholly in TEX. Leo still tries to bully me in every way. He has been demanding on a report I had never promised. What would you do if someone were to say to you, 'I don't believe you have searched hard enough'? He himself would never have a look around, but will assume with authority and certainty that nothing you do is new. A child could well do it, and even a kid knows that after a while all your ideas shall be his and you, the poor unsuspecting fool, will be left forever a broken man. Must I slave for someone who belittles me? I shall never suffer him to be my supervisor.

It is an easy thing to let someone tell you his idea and discovery, only

to bluff him afterwards that they are not new, bothering, that is, to find out neither the reason why nor since when that they have not been new. This is not constructive but destructive and dangerous. I always write clearly, leaving ample rooms for creative refutations. But this is not even a 'refutation' by any definition, Popper's or no. It is so easy, for instance, to bluff a man that his discoveries are nothing new and stubbornly, even, to insist that he has not searched hard enough. You should only do that if you have something worthwhile to say, for it is easier to destroy than it is to create.

I have been led to the study of languages through my interest in geometrically modelling the traffic and the economic networks, and I have already done some works there which I think are important, even if they were only preliminary. I think languages are the things that bind communities or social clusters together, and therefore the applications seem to be numerous. I am prepared to protect my ideas honestly, from more than one examiner and viva if necessary. I do not believe in the idea that there can be any other person apart from myself who knows everything about my project. Were this to be the case, in fact, I would even have felt that my works are nothing new. There must be a link among the studies of networks, percolation, economics, politics, psychology, neurology, and languages.

The problem of finding a common written script is in turn reduced to that of finding a one-to-one and on-to mapping between the new script and the existing one. This at once breaks at least two new grounds. Not only will one have the binding force but also one will be able to describe or even prove it precisely. And fortunately for those who value the importance of cultural diversities, nowhere in history does one see the loss of these through a redundancy of writing scripts. The Devanagari script is still for writing Sanskrit and the Hebrew script Hebrew, even though either one of these can be mapped on to the roman script one to one. On the other hand, America is not a Commonwealth country even though American and English are linguistically speaking almost identical to each other, and they do share a common writing system.

Saturday 2nd March 2002, the weather has been quite cold and dry recently. But we are heading out of a winter. This computer room is on the second floor and next to a railway line. From where I am sitting now looking out of the window one can see the train coming and going. If there is no further change, I should be arriving in Bangkok around 21:00 on 26 March by TG0426. I had better go back and get some sleep now, since it is getting a bit late.

The British Empire gradually dissolved following World War II. The UK now has 13 dependent territories. It forms the Commonwealth with

52 other countries the only one which was never a British colony of which is Mozambique. The British Empire began in 1497 when John Cabot who was an Italian seafarer sailed across the Atlantic Ocean under King Henry VII to Newfoundland, and then Sir Humphrey Gilbert, an explorer, took Newfoundland for Elizabeth I in 1583. Members of the British Empire, together with their colonial names and the dates of colonisation and independence, are namely Bangladesh (British East India Company 18th century – 1858 *and* British India 1858 – 1947 *and then* eastern Pakistan 1947 – 71, 18th century, 1971); Belize (British Honduras, 17th century, 1981); Botswana (Bechuanaland – British protectorate, 1885, 1966); Cyprus (1878, 1960); The Gambia (1888, 1965); Ghana (Gold Coast, 18th – 19th centuries, 1957), the British Togoland was integrated in 1956; Guyana (British Guiana 1796 – 1966, 1620, 1966), under Dutch rule to 1796; Hong Kong (1841, 1997), returned to China; India (British East India Company, 18th century – 1858, 1947); Jamaica (16th century, 1962), under Spanish rule until 1655; Kenya (from 1920, 1895, 1963); Lesotho (Basutoland, 1868, 1966); Malawi (British protectorate of Nyasaland 1907 – 53 *and* Federation of Rhodesia & Nyasaland 1953 – 64, 1891, 1964); Malaysia (Federation of Malaya 1957 – 63, 1874, 1963), British interests from 1786; Malta (1798, 1964), under French rule 1798 – 1814; Myanmar (Burma, 1866, 1948); Nigeria (1861, 1960); Pakistan (British East India Company, 18th century – 1858, 1947); Sierra Leone (British protectorate, 1788, 1961); Singapore (Federation of Malaya 1963 – 65, 1858, 1965); Sri Lanka (Ceylon 1802 – 1972, 16th century, 1948), under Portuguese and Dutch 1602 – 1796; Tanzania (Tanganyika, 19th century, 1961), was German East Africa until 1921; Trinidad (1797 – 1962, 1532, 1962), under Spanish rule 1532 – 1797; Uganda (British protectorate, 1894, 1962); Zambia (Northern Rhodesia – British protectorate *and* Federation of Rhodesia & Nyasaland 1953 – 64, 1924, 1964); and Zimbabwe (Southern Rhodesia from 1923 *and* UDI under Ian Smith 1965 – 79, 1895, 1980). Related to the growth and decline of the Empire are the Seven Years' War with France (1756 – 63), the First Boer War (1880 – 81), the Second Boer War (1899 – 1902), the two wars with Afghanistan (1839 – 41 and 1878 – 80), the First Opium War (1839 – 42) and the Second Opium War (1856 – 60).

Every man should tend to his own task first. Manchester is bustling nowadays it is true. For me I prefer the good old Manchester of 1994, even when you never knew when you would be mugged and all the streets were dangerous. Except for the muggers, I find that people around here back then were more humane than most people nowadays.

Founded in 1931, the Commonwealth is a voluntary association of 54 countries and their dependencies. Most of these countries once formed

part of the British Empire. Heads of government meet every two years. The members in *Africa*, together with the dates they joined, are namely Botswana in 1966, British Indian Ocean Territory 1965, Cameroon 1995, Fiji 1970 and 1997, Gambia 1965, Ghana 1957, Kenya 1963, Lesotho 1966, Malawi 1964, Mauritius 1968, Mozambique 1995, Namibia 1990, Nigeria 1960, St Helena 1931, Seychelles 1976, Sierra Leone 1961, South Africa 1910, Swaziland 1968, Tanzania 1961, Uganda 1962, Zambia 1964, and Zimbabwe 1980. In *America* there are Anguilla 1931, Antigua and Barbuda 1981, Bahamas 1973, Barbados 1966, Belize 1982, Bermuda 1931, British Virgin Islands 1931, Canada 1931, Cayman Islands 1931, Dominica 1978, Falkland Islands 1931, Grenada 1974, Guyana 1966, Jamaica 1962, Montserrat 1931, St Christopher – Nevis 1983, St Lucia 1979, St Vincent and the Grenadines 1979, Trinidad and Tobago 1962, and the Turks and Caicos Islands 1931. In the *Antarctic* there are Australian Antarctic Territory joined in 1936, British Antarctic Territory 1931, Falkland Islands Dependencies 1931, and Ross Dependency 1931. In *Asia* there are Bangladesh 1972, Brunei 1984, Hong Kong 1931, India 1947, Malaysia 1957, Maldives 1982, Pakistan 1947, Singapore 1965, and Sri Lanka 1948. In *Australia* and the *Pacific* there are Australia who joined in 1931, Cook Islands 1931, Norfolk Island 1931, Kiribati 1979, Nauru 1968, New Zealand 1931, Niue 1931, Papua New Guinea 1975, Pitcairn Islands 1931, Solomon Islands 1978, Tokelau 1931, Tonga 1970, Tuvalu 1978, Vanuatu 1980, and Western Samoa 1970. In *Europe* there are the Channel Islands which joined in 1931 and which includes Guernsey and Jersey, Cyprus 1961, Gibraltar 1931, Malta 1964, Isle of Man 1931, and the United Kingdom 1931 which includes England, Northern Island, Scotland and Wales.

Sunday 28 April, my brother says he will help me sell my books. CU Book and Amarindra are such a disappointment. They want a high share, but will do nothing to help you sell your books. The much-boasted website of the former, for example, looks real cheap. And only in Thai too, there are no websites in English. Well I have chosen English as the language to write and to express my thought, what else can I do but distance myself from them. I was going to say, 'such a bunch of people'. A large number of books returned from them are damaged. And they are inconsiderate in their dealings with you.

Here in England, wholesalers of books are doing very well because smaller shops want to buy from as few shops as possible. I think that in the long run selling to smaller shops with only a few branches may be a better idea than trying to sell to publishers like Ḍauk Yhạ̀, Amarindra, or Se-ed. To put it simply, because they are publishers, all they want is to put you out of the business. When your book is not selling well,

they prey on you by asking for a ridiculously high profit. Once you books start to sell, however, they try to prevent you from getting a firm hold of the market. In other words, they manipulate you. On the other hand, if you could build your own playgrounds and influences by accumulating trustworthy agents as well as smaller shops who are not themselves publishers, you could build for yourself and those around you your own empire, if only because you are friendly and they could talk to you directly. I would rather not expect anyone to do all the marketing for me. I used to say to myself after having talked to these people, 'If you could stand what they did to you, then you deserve it!", and I can say that it is from my experience. If you like what I have just said, then you may be able to help not only me but other smaller publishers like myself to survive in the future, while at the same time build up your own business bases. But if you only stick to big publishers, they would only treat you as an unimportant toy as I said. You talk to these 'big' people only if you already are big, not before. And then you talk directly with the boss, and that makes all the difference. I am an unknown writer, let alone famous or influential.

Monday 6 May 2002, all else are fine, except that my toes still hurts from an accident while in Thailand. Tuesday 14th, I want to move into another flat where no one smokes marijuana because it has a bad effect on my health. I have a problem with my ears that my GP thinks is due to a Menière Disease, which is in turn related to the nervous system and the inner ears. Very often the corridor is filled with the smoke of that drug. Friday 17 May, I swim at the Aquatic Centre across the street. It will be used for the Commonwealth Games in July.

The file `jdbgmgr.exe` in the `C:WINNT\sytem 32` directory has a teddy bear as its icon. There has been a hoax which says that this file is a virus and has to be deleted. There is a file of that name which is a Microsoft Debugger Registrar for Java. More interesting websites are `www.manchester2002-uk.com`, `www.art.man.ac.uk` and `www.bbc.net.uk`.

Yet there are still problems, 2nd June 2002. I have reported my complaint to Mr. Leary about one month ago regarding someone in my flat, namely Ashafaaq who lives in the flat number E4-2C, that is to say, C for Cannabis, his girl friend Janet and some of his friends, smoke marijuana, aka cannabis, have filled the corridor with its smoke on various occasions since last year, with the result of which I could smell it in my room, and also have persistently recommended that I should take the drug also.

I have told the several times already that in my present constitution is too weak, and that the drug has an adverse effect on my health. But my flat mate still maintains that I should try the drug, that it is perfectly

legal, and that it is good for my health. He also said that I could put it into foods as well. And as I keep my foods in the refrigerator in the shared kitchen, he suggested that if he put it in some of them I would be able to try it anyway. Last night around 10pm he came into the kitchen, while I was there eating, and urged me to try smoking the drug, insisting that it was a 'good stuff' . And when I said 'No, thanks!', he stood there smoking.

Telling myself that this is close to being a harassment I thereby informed both the porter at the place, that is the Sir Charles Groves HoR. Though the policewoman told me that it she did not think it was a harassment and there was nothing that the police could do about it, she did suggest that I talk to you immediately and ask for a remedy, either to change to another flat or have every single penny that I have already paid back from Jarvis.

I write to Ladan in London who works for the Jarvis University Partnerships Programme. According to her, bringing illegal drugs in to the Hall or using it in any part of the Hall is breaching the Licence Agreement. She is certain that our manager Neil will immediately take appropriate action. Roisin tells me that they have finally found another flat for me to move into. But it turns out that the previous occupant of the flat has gone back to his home in Greek before his contract comes to an end. I do not think that he will get his money back even after I have moved into his room, and this makes me feel guilty though it can never be my fault. After I have expressed this thought of mine, Neil writes back to say the police have said that they are unlikely to pursue any allegation of cannabis smoking. 'Even if there is an admission of cannabis smoking,' he says, 'they are unlikely to pursue either'. According to him, the fact that this is in breach of the licence agreement still means that for his company to seek an eviction order they would have to pursue this through the court and would take a minimum of 28 days. They would also have to admit to smoking the substance also. But then he goes on to say that I do not want the police involved at any cost, which is untrue. If polices must be involved, then they must. I have no opinions regarding whether they should be called in or not. What I do not want is secrecy. 'He can not have the best of both worlds here', he concludes. And I think he tries to say that that Greek student will not be deprived of his refund, but then again I never really understand a manager's words.

I believe that the company is not going to take any action regarding the drug problem in the premise and neither is the police. I do think that unless I could move into another room that is as good as the one I am in now, then they should let me leave with a refund the premise as

soon as I can, which I will try hard to do. This would be better than moving me into a room the previous occupant of which will not have his refund. I hope that no one will call me unkind. My health problem is real. I have endured the ordeal for at least five months. I did complain and my complaints have been ignored for a month. I have tried my best to persuade those people out of their drug habit for their own good, as hard as I could have done had they been my own children. That being not possible I still have some kind feeling towards them and wish them well. I reply Neil's letter and say that by not letting me move out with the refund of the remaining rents, he has put the samurais to shame because he has proved that his head always despises his heart, even in such a special case as this. If the company treats students well, words would spread from mouth to mouth with no one having to say anything. All the other Universities the UK over shall praise its virtue in taking a student's welfare seriously, and future business plans will take off as easily as peeling bananas. I had been a successful sales engineer in my time when I worked under Ron, so I know that this is the only way to a lasting success of a business, when the trust that the customers put on the company percolates. This is business, it is true. But it is also the field of percolation in which I specialise. I know that when these little things connect, no effort would be able to stop a company from the percolating and its success. After this letter, Neil lets me leave the Hall of Residence with a full refund of the rents for the remaining time in my contract. I feel very grateful to him, and make it my business to come to his office to thank him in person the day I move out. Both he and Janice are very kind. They bid me farewell at the front gate, and wish me all the best.

We all are born sincere. But the tiny misunderstandings since our childhood years amplify to give us mistrusts of the others, the way fluctuations in the primordial universe gave rise to the galaxies and their clusters. It is true that we can not trust everyone. But that is only precisely because this mistrust which has been childishly built up is mutual.

When I answered Neil's letter, I wrote the following. I was sorry to have heard that the way he put it sounds so terrible. 'If you are going to put me into another room which has been vacated by someone else before his contract runs out,' I wrote, 'please make sure that that previous occupant of the room receives his remaining money back'. I was not going to argue further than that. The fact is that some students have to quit their studies before they planned to, which is already disappointing and sad enough for them. I would feel guilty to occupy their room. I asked him not dress me in such a borrowed robe. I only felt sorry for these overseas students, that is all. They may have been right when they put

me in a disabled room. I have recently become aware that I talk louder and louder into a conversation, and think I am beginning to understand why. I never say that I do not want polices to catch drug users at Sir Charles Groves', but it is not my responsibility. 'But it would have been if you let me be the manager of the place', I says, 'It is unprofessional to interfere with someone else's profession and responsibility'. How could they expect me to find someone to take my place in a flat where I know there is a drug problem? Shall I not then feel any qualm? Bear with me but I do not think men have lost their reason.

I asked him to please let me leave if I could find a new place, and not to charge me for the room once I am gone. It was in good faith when I paid for my room in full when I moved in. It was not me who complained about the place still unfinished two months into the contract, about no ironing and vacuum facilities being available three months into the contract, nor about no lifts four months into the contract. I was surprised when I received a cheque of two weeks' rent back from them when I wasn't expecting it at all. But I had not expected to be put into the same flat with a marijuana smoker. I know the effect of the thing even if they call it weed. I don't understand how they put postgraduate students with someone who smokes this thing. I trusted that they would look after my well being and hope that that trust will not prove to be in vain. I said I was sorry if sometimes I use the word harass when I mean hassle only as much. The dictionary that I am using must be quite old because it gives a similar meaning to both words. I could not understand how the word has come to mean anything related to races. For me I would say the same thing about my fellow countrymen anytime if they harass me.

I used to live once at the Moberly Hall. When I had to move out before my contract ended, I was lucky because the administrator there soon found someone to take my place and as a result I did not have to pay more than a few days more than my stay. But that was during the time when Manchester had turned into a quiet town. May be it is only natural once a town becomes a city again that this kind of thing necessarily disappears.

I have noticed that when I talked my voice unconsciously escalates. I think I have some ideas now what this may imply and why it is so. If any elderly person you know have the same problem I have described, you could let me know. Better still if they know the solution but not the cause of it, because I think I know the cause but not the solution. I think that my ears find it difficult to distinguish a particular voice from the voices or noises in the background. It is the multitudes of sound, not the level of one, that is the trouble. And the reason why I speak louder

as I talk with someone is that my own voice adds to the other existing background noise and makes it louder.

Thursday 6th June 2002, I have done my homework and thereby have found a place to move into, with a confirmation that I will be able to do so as soon as possible once I have moved out from my present place. I do not believe in complaining, no matter how modern the idea seems to be. It was never me who complained about the missing lift, iron, and the Hoover when I first moved in. I am thankful for the two week's rent received for these trouble mentioned, and if I said that it should have been two months instead of two it was only a salesman touché to avoid disclosing too much gratefulness. A touché is never followed up. With my Menière condition, I have endured the marijuana smoke for five or six months. The remaining amount of money that the company should return to me is small, less than the cost for staying for a night in some of the rooms in its hotels. But as I see it, this will prove that it cares for the well being of students, which could be a plus for its future prospects of business in this idea of privatising universities' accommodation. May be in the future both UMIST and the University of Manchester or the combination of both will also become interested in the idea. This is not to mention other universities farther away from Manchester. My health problem is real, and it is there whether I like it or not. Experto credite, as Virgil has said, *experto* in Latin meaning simply those who has been through it before. I had some business experience as I used to coordinate a big ad hoc project once when I was working in the Business Development Department at Loxley in Bangkok under Ronald who sat in the board of director., and I know that these seemingly little things do count and will help out in the end. This is the case with most business conglomerations which have percolated. People will hear about it, and the more casually or unintentionally they do the better the effect will be in the long run. I do not normally divulge business ideas as such, except that in this case it could benefit myself and I desperately need the help. I shall keep my fingers crossed for the best. I should never have boasted about being a pianist. It was only once my dream.

My plan at the moment is to move into the St Gabriel on the 19th and then to move again towards the end of July to Langdale where I will also probably apply for the writing up later.

The Internet is not safe from people with malice. I hope the junk mails sent to people I know do not say that they are from me. You never know. I often receive an email written in an idiotic or malicious way, and then says that it is from one of my friends. The address would look all very genuine, but when I ask my friends it turns out that they have never sent me such a mail. For some people obviously these emails

are easy to fake. For example, the US government can pry into anything on the Internet, including your emails, if it wants to, because they know all the technologies and encryption algorithms.

The result of my study would only be at best an anticlimax now, so I might as well just do my best there along side with some other activities. It is cloudy weather again today. We have had nice days on and off. I want one day to go for a walk in national parks in America. That is if I can afford it. Without an office job this seems to be very doubtful. My personal communication has virtually been reduced to the minimum.

After the ordeals I had at my previous accommodation on the Oxford Road, I now live a peaceful life like the calm sea after a storm at the St. Gabriel's Hall, 1 Oxford Place, Victoria Park. Sister Eileen knows who Saint Louis Marie Grignion de Montfort is. This is the same Monfort whom I have known since I was a child, whose name is used as the name of my school in Jiangmhăi. Since I first came here, I live in a room in the basement where it is somewhat damp. But this is for me better than the noise pollution I had to endure earlier. This place is during term time only for women. But in the summer, men can also stay here. Areej, who comes from Libia, lives in the room next door to mine. It turns out that she likes listening to loud music. I complain to her sometimes and she adapts her habit to suit my health problem very politely and understandingly.

On the Oxford Road only next door, they are building another such ugly cubicle'd flats as the one I had just escaped from. The recent fast developments here brings about these ugly flats which I hate. Who knows, perhaps a day will come when these become decently better, and our children may even one day think with a kind humour how terrible their earlier progenitors are at the beginning of the new millennium. I go out for a walk quite often. I walk along the canal to the Salford Quays and follow the Rochdale Canal far to the north towards Rochdale. I climb up the Kinderscout a few times, and have become very familiar with it and Hayfield. I explore the Mersey River between Sale and Stockport, and pick some cherries from a park. These I bring back with me and have with ice-cream. They taste very nice. But a friend of a friend of mine says that they could be poisonous. The weather is nice here on and off. Manchester is likely to be very busy during the next two months.

Many students come to study in Manchester from Japan. We have in our basement flats Kota and Shuhei. But it seems to me that we have at least five Japanese students living here, since Hiro and Hara always come here for dinner, not to mention Koji, Mizue, Sayumi and many others. I should include Woojin in my count too. He is from Korea but speaks so perfect a Japanese that I can never say that he is not from Japan. What

is nationality, anyway, but the language one speaks. A society is held together by the language of its people. Two societies are held together by the common features they share between their languages. Ours is a large kitchen, as I will soon realise. Those kitchens on the first and the second floors are much smaller.

Maki studies now in LA in the US, and works helping in an ESL program. I receive an email from her on Wednesday 15 May 2002 in which she tells me how she is doing. She seems to me to feel attached to Thailand than she does the US. For all I know, her Thai is as fluent as a local, the thing that I would never have thought possible. I wish I could go for a walk in the national parks of the US sometimes. Just one of my dreams as usual. I wonder whether the series of books called Harry Potter has got its name from Helen Beatrix Potter (1866 – 1943) who wrote and illustrated children's books, including *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (1900).

We have a good collection of books at the St Gabriel Hall. In here silence is observed as in no other libraries, and if it was not you only have to say it once. People here are compassionate. There are also two layers of window, so the silence can be complete if we want. Here I read *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886) by Robert Louis Balfour Stevenson (1850 – 1894). I wish I could live here a year instead of a month. Shuhei likes the library too, and he is also reading Oliver Sacks. I read some of the works by Walter Scott (1771 – 1832), for example *Rob Roy* (1817) and *The Heart of Midlothian* (1818). But they are long and winding novels, so I end up skipping some parts and merely browsing others as I go along. I have tried to read the *Vanity Fair* (1847 – 48) by William Makepeace Thackeray (1811 – 1863) several times. I try to read it again here without success, so I guess it is not my to my taste.

I walk the Rochdale Canal a few times. It was built between 1799 and 1804. It linked Manchester and Halifax to Hull and Liverpool. It has 92 locks. The section between Failsworth and Littleborough is now designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest because of the floating water plantain, *Luronium natans*, that grows here.

It is now already Thursday 1st August. I do not know where the time flies to. Guess it does not have to tell me where it does. Anyway, some encouragement arrives today from David. He says that he has only read my message electronically carbon-copied to him at his email address. As for my difficulties, he says that such a situation should never be allowed to happen. He suggests that I tried to talk it over with Graham. The trouble is that I have no idea where he is now. I still have not had enough of writing. But if no one thinks that my thesis is good enough, I want to have an MPhil instead. 'But do not give up on the Ph.D,' he

says, 'until you are absolutely sure that degree is out of the question'.

How many misunderstandings come from cultural differences, and how many from the differences in language. A Japanese teacher may express his thought too harshly about your English teacher, because to him he and you being in the same group are one and the same. But for you, more distance between two persons is needed in order to have enough room to think, be creative, and be yourself. During our lifetime we may live, laugh and cry, and create. We like to do this together with someone whom we love. But the fact remains, that we are born alone and all die alone.

Researchers usually have a theme or two which occupy his mind most of the time and appear again and again in whatever he does. My themes are language and percolation, and my definition of language covers Geometry. Thailand has been involved in quite a few percolative phenomena. The currency crisis in 1997 was like a percolation, if not actually is one. Moreover, it also started a chain of crises all across the east Asian countries and spread as far as New Zealand. The traffic situation, on the other hand, had always been so bad until the onset of the crisis. I would say that it is one of the things that causes the crisis, or is anyhow caused by the thing which does. In Japan I started to look at the percolation probability of traffic networks. My idea of an economic model is that it should be a network of people, that is centred in men instead of in money. Most, if not all, of the existing macro- and micro-economic theories are centred around money and put too little emphasis on people. No doubt they can not explain the economic transitions. Money is the language of economies never its structure. Languages is the glue which binds everything together. Therefore, any model based on money can only be a model of a language not that of the structure.

If we accept this humanistic network as being important in economic modelling, then we have to look at language. Money may be a language of transaction, but we could do well by studying its flow through the network of men. Language is the thing which binds and segregate the society in to cultures. There is no racism as such, except that which comes from the difference in language. For example, unlike in Manchester there is no Irish communities in Australia because all Irish descendants there speak Aussie and they identify themselves with it. For the same reason, most of the Chinese descendants in Thailand never says that they are Chinese because for most Chinese is not the first language.

If language binds society together, what is the thing that binds languages together? Linguistically speaking it may be the historical background they share, but in practice it is always the writings and the writing systems. Therefore not only Chinese and Thai look different to the

Western eyes, but so are the German typefaces in print before the Wars, with its only two special characters, namely those for *tz* and *sz*. Signs are usually thought of as being different from all verbal languages, not because they are really different but because they could not be written, let alone be written in the roman alphabet. Both Chinese and Japanese may have their excellent roman phonetic transcription, respectively the Pīn Yīn and the Romanji, but neither of these can be considered a writing system. They can only represent the sounds of the language not its script. One can hardly say anything meaningful with them. Thai never had a workable roman phonetic transcription, let alone one that could be called a writing system. I have developed roman writings, not mere phonetic transcriptions, for Lanna and Thai. I am planning the essential outline for those for Chinese and Japanese. I also want to develop a roman system of writing Signs, which must necessarily contain the essential spatial information.

At St Gabriel I move up to live in the second floor instead of moving out to Langdale. I still join the trips organised by Aoife for the English classes almost every week. Some of the Chinese students bring their family and are at times demanding and loud. But I am quiet and behave myself, so we get on well together. I do not know why I keep calling Aoife *Eva*. I guess it is because that is what it sounds like. She gives me a strange look whenever she hears me calling her by that name, which is every time. Sometimes I sit on the bus with Kenji who comes from Taiwan.

We go to Buxton, Conwy, Llandudno and York. We also go to Blackpool, but that is different. Blackpool in the 17^{th} century was a town of clay huts built around a peat bog the colour of the water of which was black, hence its name. There is a tower there which was opened in 1894. It weighs over 2,900 tonnes, and you will be surprised to hear that it was inspired by the Eiffel Tower. Both could not be more different from each other. While the tower in Paris is proportional and elegant, the Blackpool Tower is simply a tower. We are in Blackpool on 17 August.

The Pavilion Gardens in Buxton was built in 1871 by Edward Milner. There is a hot house with tropical plants. We go to Buxton on 13^{th} July 2002, when there is the Buxton Well Dressing Festival Carnival during the afternoon.

Not far from Llandudno to the east is the Colwyn Bay. There sank the *Resurgam*, Britain's first mechanically propelled submarine. It was designed in 1879 by George William Garrett (1852 – 1902), who then had it built at the Britannia Iron Works in Birkenhead, opposite Liverpool on the Wirral peninsula. Garrett lived in Moss Side, Manchester, where his father was a vicar of Christ Church. *Resurgam*, Latin for *I rise*

again, is expected to be raised and conserved. The submarine sank on 24 February 1880, was found in 1995, and now looking forward to coming up.

Friday 26 July 2002, my brother has written to say that he is interested in learning how to massage the feet, so I wonder to myself if it is good to massage your feet? The soles of your feet have got a lot of nerve ends, I think it is not good, for example, to wear sandals with soles raised in the middle to fit the curved part of the feet, because these press on the nerves. The opening ceremony of the 17th Commonwealth Games was very spectacular. I watched it on the TV here at the St Gabriel Hall of Residence. Manchester is now bustling with people.

We visit York, and on our way there I learn about the Wars of the Roses, those civil wars in England from 1455 until 1485 between the houses of Lancaster and York. The badges of these house are red and white roses respectively. Both claimed the throne through descent from the sons of Edward III. The name was coined by Walter Scott.

I see Maureen, our cleaning lady, every morning. She seems very interested when she knows that I have been baking my own bread. Peter is our handy man at St Gabriel. I once broke the mirror in my room by accident, and he did not say a word. He likes to listen while I play the piano. There are two pianos here, one on the chapel on the first floor and another on on the ground floor in the TV room. I doubt if there are more than two. Normally I am the first one to find out all the pianos in the vicinity.

Ian is from Ireland, and Anna is his girlfriend. She once exclaimed, 'Murderer!', when I try to tell her how I gas all the yeasts baking my bread inside the oven. Bees always come into our kitchen and can not get out. Koshi always stamp on them with satisfaction whenever he sees one. I rescue them every time I see one. Giovanni says, 'Don't get yourself stung!' But I am good at doing this. I hold my pan on its path and let the bee walk on to it. Then I simply open the window, and shake the pan outside. The window, however, is high and I have to climb up on to the kitchen's working table to do this. Anna thinks of me more kindly when I explain to her how I rescue all the bees. 'I put them out side' I says to Anna, 'Not like Koshi who likes putting them out of their misery'.

Friday 2nd August 2002, I wonder what the Kiwi's are doing. The Aussie and the British have been doing quite well in the Commonwealth Games and I have been looking forward to, but have hardly seen any Kiwi in the finals. Ian Thorpe's swimming is marvellous. My 6th Form music teacher has got the same last name. Every time I hear the name Thorpe it reminds me of her. She was an excellent teacher. He definitely has

got her nose, but way taller! Jamie, Kate and Penny are from Australia. They watch the Games too, but I am the only one who watches the swimming competitions whenever he possibly can.

Every year the British Lions, that rugby union team selected from the best players in the British Isles, tours Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. The first tour took place in 1888, but the first one whose players are from all the four Home Unions, that is England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, was in 1910. On the New Zealand side is the legendary All Black.

The Union Jack may have a complicated look, but it is actually made of three different simple flags, namely St Andrew's of Scotland, St George's of England, and St Patrick's of Ireland. Its name means that it is meant to be flown on the jackstaff of a warship. The St George's flag pictures a *plus* sign of red on white. Both the other two flags are a picture of the *multiplication* sign, the only difference being only that the St Andrew's one is white on blue while the St Patrick's one is red on white. In 1707 St Andrew's cross was superimposed on top of the St George's, and in 1801 St Patrick's cross was added. Both the flag of New Zealand and that of Australia have the Union Jack on the upper-left corner and the Southern Cross on the rigt-hand side. But the former has four red stars whereas the latter has six white ones. Australian flag's Southern Cross contains the fifth star, and below its Union Jack there is also another star.

Wales and England came together under the Act of Union of 1536 during Henry VIII's reign. Then Scotland joined the two in 1707, thus creating the Kingdom of Great Britain, to which Ireland later enter in 1800 (the Act of Union of 1800 took effect on 1st January 1801) and become the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. The crown of Scotland and England was united in 1603 when James VI of Scotland succeeded Elizabeth I as James I of England. The Act was revoked in 1922 when the Irish Free State was constituted. Now the United Kingdome comprises England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

I have been watching the Commonwealth Games on the TV. The opening ceremony was very well done, and it was cloudy but did not rain on that day. We have had drizzles and rains everyday ever since though. Now my time is only divided between watching the Games and study, so there are not many interesting things to mention. Yesterday I bought an excellent map of the US for 30 pence from a library, and I am reading about the national parks of the world.

My address now is St. Gabriel's Hall. It is the same St. Gabriel as that to which Montfort College belongs. I walk pass the statue of St. Louis Marie de Montfort everyday now. It is exactly the same as those

we have in Thailand, which makes me feel like being in a primary school again.

My sister is going to Vienna, but I shall be unable to join her there. I have been to both places once, that is when I went to Italy. Vienna is a city of parks. For example there is the 18th-century Schönbrunn palace with its big park west of Vienna. The Habsburgs used to live there. I walked there, so it is not that far from the latter. To see the park is free. Only the palace, which I didn't see, has an entrance fee. Salzburg is a small town which snuggly lies amongst the mountains. There is not much to do there, though there are a few places which let you have a look inside for a fee. There is a short walk up to where a castle is. I like the view of the town from there. This is where the film *The Sound of Music* was made, and where there is annually a music festival. Its name in French is Salzbourg. Not far from Salzbourg is Innsbruck with its university and activities and sports for winter.

Vienna is not far from Venice, Florence, and Budapest. You could visit these places if you go to Vienna. All of them are very impressive. West from Vienna is Nice in France, which is in the area known as the 'Riviera'. Nice, being pronounced such that it rhymes with 'niece', is nice. I think the visa for Austria is a schenken visa which covers all the places mentioned above. The town Piza, where the leaning tower is, is not far from Florence. Train tickets in Italy are cheaper than those in France and Austria. Likewise they should still be comparatively cheap in Budapest. When I came back to Italy from France or Austria I always bought a ticket only to the first town on the border, and then got off the train to buy another ticket from there. So the ticket from Florence to Nice is cheaper than the one from Nice to Florence even though it is on the same train, because the latter is bought in Italy while the former in France! But they are using the Euro now, and I don't know if that will make any difference to this discrepancy in the price. I also went to Verona, that town where the real Romeo and Juliet lived. There are the houses of both, and a balcony where Romeo talked with Juliet under the moon. I remember thinking while in Vienna that the city was far bigger than I had imagined. I always associated it with horse-drawn carriages and porters and the musical scenes.

> Three cheers for a death
> neither obliterated
> nor else recorded.

When we say farewell to each other when we are leaving the St Gabriel, Vera wishes me good luck in my adventures around the world. Jesús writes me the following haiku written by Mario Benedetti.

Un pesimista
es un optimista
bien informade.

How true!

On Thursday 29 August 2002, Teruyoshi writes to say that Maki is still studying Sociology in Los Angeles. They saw the movie *Lord of the Rings* last year, he said, but felt disappointed. This is always the case to a certain degree when good books are made into a film. My definition of a good book is that it contains two different themes,.one in the background while the other on the foreground. The main theme, the more profound one, is always the former one. Thus all tragedies are by my definition good books. Other examples include Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Hugo's *Les Misérables*, Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, Tolstoy's *War and Peace* and of course Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*. One can often put only one of these themes into a movie. The background, abstract and philosophical theme one often has to greatly modify or even leave out altogether. Thus in the case of the Lord of the Rings, for example, the true theme of the book is put into that recurring poem which begins with, 'The road goes ever on and on, down from the door where it began'. Our road starts from the doorstep of our home. Then it leads us along until we join some other larger ways, but we never know for sure where it finally leads us to. The other theme that is put up in front is often childish, exciting, or adventurous. When one reads the book, therefore, one simply ask no questions how on earth a single ring could command and control the fate of all the earths. What one reads is the philosophy, the second theme. The first theme is in this case invariably irrelevant. Similarly to this is the case with the Les Misérables. Therefore Jean Valjean's superhuman abilities becomes irrelevant, considering that the second and more important theme is one of Christian love and sacrifice. And in the War and Peace by Leo Nikolayevich Tolstoy (1828 – 1910), the vanity of Pierre's life and the lives of those around him is of no importance, because what is important is the insight into the nonheroic nature of wars that he gives. The Don Quixote drives this to an extreme. Here the two themes are not merely different but stand in stark contrast in the juxtaposition with each other, as a result of which the effect is made the more complete and dramatic. It is no wonder that the Italians should think very highly of this work by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra (1547 – 1616). Here we may forget about Don Quixote's madness for the faith in, and the sacrifices for the ideals of the causes he holds. He is no mad man to us, not an ordinary one in any case even if he is one.

According to Yann, it seemed clear to the Pythagoreans that the distances between the planets have the same ratios as those produced by

harmonious sounds in a plucked string. 'To them,' he says, 'the solar system consisted of ten spheres revolving in circles about a central fire, each sphere giving off a sound the way a projectile makes a sound as it swished through the air; the closer spheres gave lower tones while the farther [ones] moved faster and gave higher pitched sounds'. 'All combined into a beautiful harmony, the music of the spheres', he adds. 'Believe in your ideas', he says to me, 'moreover they are beautifull'. ([sic])

I move from St Gabriel to Moberly Hall in September.

On 13 September 2002 I talk with Brian who is a porter at the Moberly Hall where I now live in. 'Oh, yes! I remember Bobby. He used to make Thai curry so hot I could not breathe,' he says, then carries on, 'I have here cards from some other Thai students. Do you know Bhạnubongṣa? He's still here.' 'Bobby always said that I could come and visit him over there. He said he has a houseand everything. He's a lecturer,' Brian says in his amiable Scottish accent.

'His university,' I tell him, 'the university where he lives and works is very good. It is in a very nice town four to five hundred miles from Bangkok. You should come and visit Thailand sometimes.'

'I have never been anywhere outside the country before,' he says.

From the window of my room you can see the Holy Name Church (1867 – 1871). It is now Grade I listed and receiving a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. They have covered it with vinyl all over, and are strengthening it up.

§

Bucky-ball has been a big surprise of the past decade. All chemistry textbooks until 1990 taught that carbon has only two crystalline forms, that is graphite and diamond. Now we know that there exists a whole family of carbon-cage structures. The prototype of the fullerene family, carbon-60, has as its faces twelve pentagons and twenty hexagons. Its shape is that of a football.

Like sand, zeolites are aluminosilicates. But here there are large internal cavities. The internal surface area of a piece zeolite the size of a sugar lump is about the size of a football ground. This leads to their application as molecular sieves which are shape- as well as size-selective.

October 2002, AMC Cinemas on Deansgate are running a promotion programme where you can watch their movies free of charge by simply printing out a voucher from their website and exchange it for a ticket at the ticket counter. This way I watch several films, including the Reign of Fire which I think is very propagandistic. In it the world has been reduced to ashes by dragons. You may get rid of all of them by taking

care of their leader, the male dragon. It is in England where a boy found it, and it is here where it is finally killed. Our Jack is English, and yet his mother is American and they could do it only because the troop from the US comes to help them. Such movie like this needs no scriptwriters to write the story. It is what one would expect to find in the world of fascism and its propaganda. I remember having asked the girl at the ticket booth whether is was a Hollywood movie, and she said that she did not know. The movie contains a mixture of American and English, so it would have been difficult to answer my question. But this place itself is amazing. There are so many cinemas here that I lose count. This is not the Manchester I knew in 1995 but a European capital.

The FBI may be in the US but the BFI is British. It is the British Film Institute founded in 1933 to promote the cinema as a mens of entertainment and instruction. It includes the National Film Archives (founded 1935) and the National Film Theatre (founded 1951).

Leo writes essentially to everyone. He says that he finds it hard working with me. He feels that the planned thesis submission date for December 2002 is ambitious. *But Brutus says he was ambitious. And Brutus is an honourable man. So are they all, all honourable men.*

§

I am not mad. I am demoniac. I am madness maddened.

Tuesday 15 October 2002. Last night I went to a dinner at Platt Church with Carlos, and afterwards went to visit his place where he stays with two Daniel's one of whom is in our Chemical Engineering Department while the other is a member of the Conservative Party.

Today I have to move out from Moberly Hall again. The last time was in 1995. I shall miss the view of Kinder Scout, though it is too far away and I do not know which peak is the one. When I wake up it is already 8 o'clock. I have no time to cook. There is only one microwave oven for more than ten people anyway.

I take a shower and then come down to the front desk. John the porter on duty says that I would need to leave before half past nine, otherwise I will be charged £12.- I have to hurry up. I go upstairs to my room in a lift, push my big bag out of the room into the corridor and climb the stairs down to the third floor to ask Pat, who then calls Gillian who says the same thing. I am resolved now to pay the £12.- Then get I a trolley from the ground floor and take it up to my room. I pack all my belongings in it and come down to the ground floor. At the porter's desk I return the room keys and then sit in the corner where the telephones are, out of sight and sort and throw away brochures I have been collecting. I have to leave behind the bucket and mop that I

have used to do the washing. This I place by the lift door, hoping that someone will benefit from my beloved mop and bucket. Most likely they will have to clean the floor instead of washing clothes as I have subjected them to.

I push the trolley all the way to UMIST where I leave it in B9 while putting the big bag in C62. All the odds and ends I put either in my locker in C62 or the one I have in B9. Then I return the trolley to John at Moberly and get the black cap which I forgot and left behind there in my room. The remaining yeasts I give to Pat. There still remain about half of them in the can. 'I wouldn't like to throw them away because they are alive,' I tell her.

I go to the office of Singapore Airline where I am told that my flight back to Thailand on 23rd December has already been confirmed, and so there is a need to leave them neither Carlos's mobile number nor the number of B9. From here I go to the coach station, the new Chorlton Street Coach Station, and buy myself a Traveller Trail Pass for £160.- which allows me 14 days of unlimited trips within 60 days' time. I shop at Quiksave and then go to the John Rylands Library. Then I return to UMIST adn get on a coach at 1:30 the next morning to Glasgow.

The coach station in Glasgow is called the Buchanan Coach Station. It is still dark here at 7 am. The lounge is still not open. It is closed during the night until 7:30 am. I plan to go to Fort William. It is very cold this morning. To go to Fort William I need to change from a National Express coach into a Citylink one which is Scottish. Though I have a ticket to go to Fort William, I would not be able to come back since my coach card is only valid for England and on National Express services. So I decide not to go. However, the bus that goes to Fort William from Glasgow is quite interesting. It goes further all the way to Portree in the Isle of Skye. Between Fort William and Inverness the road passes a scenic route along Loch Ness, but no National Express's coaches pass that way. The Citylink coach driver is short-tempered for I am holding up a queue of a few people, asking him questions. 'Can I get another ticket for returning from Fort William from you? The girl in Manchester must have forgotten to book a return seat for me,' I says to him. 'I said, "No!" You will have to pay if you want another ticket. Your Traveller Trail Pass is not valid for travelling within Scotland. For that you need a Scottish Rail Pass. Go to the ticket office! I should have left here five minutes ago.' So in that state I leave this moody coach driver who seems perfectly normal otherwise, and book myself another seat but not to Fort William.

I get on another coach to go to Bournmouth. The route from Glasgow to Bournmouth proves to be very long indeed. Trains here are faster than

coaches. The trip takes ages and I feel very sick just before it ends. After I arrived I have fish 'n chips from a shop which gives a 10 % discount to students with a student card. The railway station is nearby and there are taxis parking between there and the bus terminals. But as is the case with the coaches, no trains run during the night. I get on a coach and go to Poole as that is the only one available at this time of the night.

Poole has more shops. There is a promenade which leads to the piers. I walk there and find it very pleasant. There are hotels and restaurants. Boats dock there. There will be no more coaches until morning, so there is no need to hurry. I sit in a few places watching the boats sleeping. It is by no means cold. I only have a woolen shirt on top.

After the restaurants have closed I walk back to the station to wait for the first coach at three in the morning which will take me to the Heathrow Airport. Two Japanese girls have missed their train and so are also waiting to get on the same coach. The night, or rather the morning, is cold. I sit inside an instant photo booth to avoid the wind. Both girls are shivering from cold. 'Koshi ga samui!', one of them says. A man approaches them and draws them into a lengthy conversation. I hear him say he is also going to the airport. He is all talks, for when the coach finally arrives he does not get on it. I have a pair of long johns on, and so fair better than the two girls. I alternately get up to walk about and sit down in the booth where it smells of chemicals. The plastic stool feels cold against my buttocks when I sit down. We all welcome the Flightlink when it finally arrive. I fall to sleeping as soon as I get on the coach and sit down, and only find out later that I must have dropped my black cap on it, the very one I have retrieved earlier from Moberly Hall.

I arrive at Heathrow sleeping and have to be wakened up by the driver. I have a look around, walk to terminal 1, 2 and 3, and clean myself inside a disabled toilet. Once the ticket office for the coaches opens, I book a ticket to Bristol. I plan to go from there to Aberystwyth. I get there before noon, but the coach to Aberystwyth would not leave until after four and the trip will take five hours. By the time we are there it will be 9 pm. I get myself a ticket to go to Penzance and plan my trip tomorrow to Inverness. I should have liked to meet Graham in Manchester on Friday, though the meeting is not confirmed. I book a return ticket to Manchester, which I never use because I change my mind and decide to go to Penzance instead.

The trip to Penzance passes the moors and the coast lines. We stop at Plymouth where the weather is perfect with clouds but very sunny. In all these respects it is similar to the New Plymouth in New Zealand, and thus reminds me thereof. I sit behind an elderly lady who sits in

the front-most right seat just behind the driver's seat. The driver is a good-looking lad who wears his hair long and ties it together behind his head. He is happy and talkative. A great part of the passengers are the elderlies. I drink on the way the lemonade which I bought earlier at Mark & Spencer in Bristol. It goes very well with this summer weather.

Marks & Spencer is a chain of stores founded in 1884 by Michael Marks (1863 – 1907), and joined in 1894 by Thomas Spencer (1852 – 1905) who was a cashier at one of his suppliers. Michael Marks was a Jewish Russian refugee. His first stall was set up at the market place in Leeds with the slogan, 'Don't ask the price, it's a penny'. The number of stalls and shops had increased by 1900, and in 1903 it became a private company Marks & Spencer Ltd. The company went public in 1926, the *St Michael* trademark registered in 1928, and in 1998 there were 289 stores in the UK, 260 in North America, 90 in Europe and 33 in the Far East.

Most parts of the road are no motor-ways and are winding at some points. Now there are some wind turbines to the right, partially hidden behind a small rise in the ground. They must be for generators of electricity because they look similar to the ones I saw in a picture of wind farm. The driver's name is Craig. He does the last stretch alone when he drives faster and at one point forgets to close the luggage door. A passenger who sits in the back seat reminds him, for which he is gratefully thanked.

It has just gotten dark when we arrive in Penzance. The train and the coach and bus stations are close to each other and to the sea. A staff tells me to step into the common room out of the rain when I ask him whether he could give me some hot water. I show him the empty marmite bottle I have, so he understands what the water is for. You wash the bottle with hot water to make a delicious soup.

From here you may take a short walk to a lovable promenade. There is a park there on the ground bought by Queen Victoria in 1897, the name of which is Bulitho. Whether this be an Indian name I do not know. A long promenade stretches between and parallel to this Victorian park and the sea, the latter of which is some fifteen feet below.

Penzance is in Cornwall, a resort and seaport on Mount's Bay 24 miles southwest of Truro. It is interesting to note that Cornwall is called the *British Riviera* by the English while the real Riviera in France, that coast around Nice, is known to the French people as *la promenade anglaise*, that is to say, the *English Promenade*.

The driver of the next and last coach tonight which goes to London do not let me get on his coach with my pass, since I have not made a reservation and he says all the seats will be filled up in Plymouth, so I

shall have to wait for the first coach in the morning that leaves at 4:10. I walk in the night for a few hours along the promenade. There are stars in the sky. The moon is nearly full and I think I could twice see a shooting star. At one a.m. a man comes up in his car which he parks by the beach a little way beyond where I stand and then play either an accordion or a Scottish bagpipe. I think it is the latter for it feels like that which I heard played in the film *Local Hero*, never mind this being about the farthest point on the whole of the British Isle from Scotland. The several tunes he plays perfectly suit the mood of the surroundings and the atmosphere. He leaves after half an hour and I am left alone walking in the darkness lit only by the moon, the street and city lights. There are some breezes but it is neither windy nor as cold as the previous night in Poole. Clouds come at three bringing with them some drizzle, but they soon leave.

The name 'Penzance' is derived from *pen sans* which means *holy headland* in Cornish. Markets were established in the 16th century. The Victorian railway station here was built by the Great Western Railway.

I have been sleeping in bits and pieces, so I do not feel that much sleepy. But once on the coach, I sleep most of the way and see nothing much until well after we have passed Plymouth. My coach eventually goes to London, so I change here into another one which goes to Bristol. I manage to keep my eyes open just before we arrive in Bristol, so I can see that it is a nice day. There is still plenty of time before the coach to Inverness leaves, so I go to Cardiff which is to the west of and not far from Bristol. Before I leave Bristol I walk to a park where there is a river and some ruins of the remains of Bristol Castle. There is an entrance of a tunnel udg from inside the castle that leads to outside the wall. This was used for mounting a surprise attack on attacking troop outside. This tunnel must have been carefully guarded to prevent a *reverse surprise attack*. Anyhow its entrance is locked up now with iron bars. There are some cans and bottles thrown in there from the outside. There are also puddles of water and it looks damp inside.

Cardiff is in another country, that is to say, Wales where it is the capital. I have half a day there. There is a river not far from the coach station, and there is there a large building that looks like a ship. Between this ship-shaped building and the river runs a raised promenade the fence of which is a wavy curve. The afternoon sun comes across the river and meet the fence first before it touches the boarded floor of the path, so that there arise wavy lines of shadow on the floor along the path where you walk. Everyone is misled by this shadow pattern which prevents one from walking in a straight line. Unconsciously you would snake along the boards. There is a park at the other end of the path.

I like the park and I am glad that I started my walk instead of staying around the station. At the park there are some ruins presumably of an old church, and there is a college of music. There is also the Cardiff Castle which is open to the public but there is a fee charged to get in. The moat around the castle is now fully filled up and there is there lawns instead of water. I walk to the National Museum and Art Gallery. The collections are rather small, although there is a good one of prehistoric Britain. All metals are now rusted and reduced – copper becomes brittle and crumbling while swords become mere thin ribbons – all except the gold, which still shines and looks brand-new, exactly the same as they must have looked millennia ago. Then I return to the coach station, which is really a bus station where there are only a few stands reserved for and shared by all the coaches. I check in at a counter where boarding passes are issued. To prevent people getting on the wrong coach these come in different colours. Mine is a yellow one. I have to stand aside while those with the blue one are boarding their coach. The coach I wait for comes half an hour late, so that once back in Bristol I do not have to wait long for another one to go to Inverness.

Waiting for the Inverness coach now I want to buy some food from Mark and Spencer, impressed with the marmalade I bought the other day, but it is already closed. So walk around until I find one Tesco that is still open. I only buy a loaf of bread to go with the Salami. I was going to say Marmite but for the fact that I have already finished it here yesterday before I went to Penzance. And I remember trying to find some hot water to wash the bottle to make a soup. A café at the Bristol coach station would sell the hot water for 10 p. Another one at the station in Plymouth also said the same thing, where the owner also added, 'We are here for business not for charity'. Anyway I do not think that a thimbleful 50 ml of hot water would have made much of a charity, so impressed with this attitude of his I keep my exhausted marmite bottle and wait until we were in Penzance.

Again, the trip to Inverness is a long one but it is less wearing than the one I earlier took from Glasgow to Bournmouth. In Glasgow I change into another coach. Thankfully it is not as cold as the last time I was here. Also, somebody opens the tour lounge at the far end of the rows of stands. In there it is snugly warm, and the toilets are free besides instead of costing 20 p as is the case with those at the main hall. Beside the tour lounge there is a small door which has a number pad for entering the pin number to open the door. The door opens on to the stairs which leads up to a lounge used by the crew on the first floor. The Buchanan coach station is rectangular in its layout, with roofed paths running along the rims and the coaches gathering in the inside. The path only breaks at

one corner where the buses and coaches enter and leave. It was Friday 18 October 2002 yesterday when I left Bristol for Glasgow on Service 336 at 20:10. Today is Saturday when I am in Inverness. It is drizzling and I shop at a supermarket nearby. I come to the public library which is next to the coach terminal. Then I walk from there to the tourist information centre. There is an excursion in an hour to go to Loch Ness and cruise on a boat. There is a discount if you buy your ticket here at the Information Centre and if you are a student. But I choose instead to walk to the river and then go up the hill on the other side.

It is lovely along the banks of the river in the middle of which there is a big island where you can explore on foot. I like sitting on the bank of the river watching it flows, and everywhere still alive for it is only autumn. The walk up on the hill is equally enjoyable, except that there are more paths than those shown in the rough direction from the information centre. I manage to hit the wooded ridge overlooking the sea. Tracing along this I finally reach a road which follow until I come to a bridge where there are a series of water gates. I return to Glasgow that evening, and then on Service 336 at 11 pm to Manchester. The one thing I like about this coach service is that about mid way to Manchester it stops for half an hour at a place where there is a shower room which I come to use several times during the course of my Tourist Trail Pass period. It is an interesting service which shuttles between Glasgow in the very north to Penzance in the very south. Along the way it hardly stops at all between Glasgow and Bristol, but does so more frequently in Cornwall. It sometimes stops in Manchester before going to Birmingham, but often there would be an auxiliary coach carrying people from Glasgow to Manchester. This latter is usually no National Express coach. I guess that this is because Manchester has grown too fast, which results in an increased number of passengers. I reach Manchester after midnight. There are still many people on the street around the coach station. I walk pass the Gay Village to my desk in MB B9 at UMIST and there work at a computer until morning. For two months hereafter it will be my fate that Sleep shall have to find me on a chair, a seat on the coach or anywhere except in on a bed in a home.

County is the Norman name equivalent to the Anglo-Saxon term *shire*. There are only two counties in England the name of which contains the word 'Greater', one is Greater London and the other Greater Manchester. It seems to me that the former is the capital of the country and home of the Conservative Party while the latter the capital of the world's industrial revolution and the labour movement and consequently home of the Labour Party. This may be an oversimplification, but the rise and fall of Manchester seem to depend on whether Labour or respectively Con-

servative is in power. Take the road and traffic networks for instance. All motorway initiatives and extensions had happened during Labour's majority in the Government, for example the five-mile Stretford-Eccles bypass, M63 in 1960, and the combining of M62, M63 and M66 to make the M60. A counter-example of the six-lane motorway proposed in 1993 to run alongside M62 caused a great outcry and was in the end cancelled. Likewise all transport schemes including the Metrolink and the Monorail.

Tories were originally Irish guerrillas who attacked the English. The Tory Party existed from 1680 until 1830 when it turned into the Conservative Party, during the period of which it held office uninterrupted apart from the period during 1714 – 60 when, suspected of sympathising with the Jacobites, it was kept out of power. There were only two parties then, the other one being the Whigs' which was supported by the nonconformists and trading classes. Tories were supported by squires and parsons. The founding of the Labour Party in 1900 broke the two-party tradition in British politics. From its inception until 1906 it was known as the Labour Representation Committee, arisen from a conference between the trade unions, the Independent Labour Party, and the Fabian Society.

Conservative's Magaret Thatcher was in power during 1979 – 90 and John Major during 1990 – 7. In the 1980s the gap between rich and poor increased. Blair's *New Labour* won a landslide victory in May 1997. The Party's anthem is 'The Red Flag', writte by the Irish socialist Jim Connell (1850 – 1929).

There are now in England 6 metropolitan counties, 34 non-metropolitan counties and 34 unitary authorities. In 1966 the Welsh and Scottish counties were abolished and replaced by 22 and respectively 33 unitary authorities. Northern Ireland has six counties.

Scotland, 25th October 2002. Again on Service 336 I go to Glasgow, then change into Service 916 to Fort William. The date written on my tickets is yesterday's. I have postponed them one day, and that poses no problems. It starts to drizzle shortly after I arrived in Fort William. I walk to the public library from where the coaches stop. There is a railway station on the left-hand side and the path to the library leads through the underpass to the other side of the road. Browsing around inside the library I find the Jacobite Trilogy by D. K. Broster which seems to be an interesting book.

Fort William was founded in 1690 by General McKay who named it after King William. Its Gallic name is *An Ghearasdan.*, which means *the garrison.* The Great Glen Way stretches 73 miles from the Great Glen or Glennmor to Lochness, thus connecting Fort William to Inverness.

There is a plaque, a tribute to Bailie Angus White, *ex desertis fecit flores.*

The West Highland Way is a path that goes from Fort William to Devil's Staircases, Loch Tella, Loch Lomond and then to Milngavie. There is a circular walk which I take. At one point it breaks off to go up to a radio station, after which I retrace my steps back to the circular path. Here I am too absorbed in my thought that miss the turn the first time, and have to walk an extra half mile back to it again. From there a path leads down into a valley, then along a creek or river until it finally returns to Fort William. The last stretch runs along this rivulet and a road which I keep on my left and the former on my right. I meet a young farmer and his wife working on their sheep. It has been overcast all day and had started to drizzle as soon as I started to walk. 'Not a good day to come here in this weather. You can not see anything through this fog,' says the man after saying yes when I asked him whether it is the road to Fort William on which I now walk. 'I quite like the weather,' I return, 'It is not too hot to walk around when it is overcast, except for the fog of course'. A little after that there is a Wishing Stone, aka Samuel's Stone or Clach Mic Shomhairle, a big black stone about the height of a man. In Scottish Gaelic, Counsel Stone is called Clach Chomhairle. At 7 pm, not long after it got dark, I return to Glasgow and from there to Manchester at 11 pm.

Sunday 27th October 2002, again from Mancester to Glasgow at 1:30 am via Service 336. From Buchanan in Glasgow to Aberdeen is by Service 592 which goes to Aberdeen on the coast north from Edinburgh and south of Inverness. The service carries further on and terminates at Inverness. Today is the end of British Summer Time daylight-saving. The clock which has been pushed forward one hour on the last Sunday of March is now taken back again to, for these countries, the Greenwich Mean Time. So unless you adjust your watch the coach to Aberdeen will appear to leave one hour ahead of its 7:15 am schedule. You need to take precaution when you travel just past the end of the daylight-saving period like this.

The toilet sets inside the toilet on Castlegate Beach are beautiful China porcelain from North Oxford. I walk from the station to the beach, noting the location of the museum along the way. At the beach I follow a Shore Trail North that leads up to the top of a hill overlooking some cricket grounds and the sea. It is windy; the sky is bright but with clouds and the rain has yet to come. I like the point where I am standing now on top of a small hill. I put on my cap backwards to prevent it from being blown away by the wind. You can see a long stretch of shore line with cliffs in the distance. There is another, larger hill on the shore

south of Aberdeen on the other side of a river. To the north there is also another river. Aberdeen sits between these two river mouths.

The Body, Mind and Spirits group is holding a conference in one of the buildings which stand facing the sea. I have helped them in the kitchen at their other conference in Bangor back in 1995. I have a look inside, but do not think anyone would have recognised me. You need to pay to attend the therapy classes.

I walk back to the museum while the day is so fine. By the time it closes the rain will have come. The streets are all busy by now, this is after all a big town. Inside the museum is displayed a bathythermograph dated from 1940s. This kind of instrument was developed in 1938 by Wallace and Tiernan to record the change of temperature against depth. This it records by using a stylus controlled by thermometer moving a cross a smoked slide, the smoke being produced by burning bear grease. With a bathythermograph the structure of thermodine is discovered which is the layer of rapid temperature change between surface and deep water.

The Faroe Shetland Channel is more than 1,000 metre deep and separates the Scottish Continental Shelf which is 200 metre deep from the shelf surrounding the Faroe Islands. Each second seven million cubic metres of warm Atlantic water flows through the channel. The North Atlantic Water has the salinity of 35.4 and is $-10°C$. From this, the salinity decreases with depth into Modified North Atlantic Water, Arctic Intermediate Water, Norwegian Sea Intermediate Water, and then slightly increases in Norwegian Sea Deep Water which has the temperature of $-2°C$ and the salinity of 24.8.

The North Sea lies among Norway, England and Belgium. It is rich with oil, the fact that was first known to Askeladden when he exclaimed, 'I found it! I found it!' Not long before he did an international conference in Geneva in 1958 gives the right over the Norwegian Continental Shelf to Norway. So Norwegians woke up one day to find that they are in the possession of this vast oil reserve, one of the greatest in the world. The immediate impact of this discovery is on the Norwegian economy. But more than that it also has an influence on the world politics and Russia, the only superpower which has little oil reserve of its own and where most of its natural gas is in the faraway Siberia. The Perestroika was an attempt to remedy the effect of this shortcoming, the discovery of oil in the North Sea exacerbates the situation for Russia and the tragedy at Chernobyl seals its fate. Yes the Internet plays an important part in disintegrating USSR, but it is Oil, as it always has been since time immemorial, that does the job. Russia could not export its enormous amount of natural gas to the West because petroleum suddenly

became cheaper at a crucial moment. Having Oil may not be a sufficient condition for being a superpower, but it is a necessary condition for the same. Following the same line of thought it is now the US's turn to worry. With its energy-gobbling industries, America would have to be able to control the price of oil it purchase if it wants to keep all its fifty States together, let alone stay remaining superb in power. Thus one can easily see where the 11^{th} September 2001 events in America, the US involvement in Afghanistan in 2002 and the Rape of Bagdad in 2003 come in. A nomad Hoyle may say, 'Home is where the wind blows', but every American knows that *home is where the wealth is.* Thou shalt have no peace until thou have the Petrol. And for that no one shall remain in peace. Neither shalt thou be at peace after thou have gained the Petroleum. Modern civilisation based on technology has never known a time when it did not revolve around Oil.

Norway claimed its sovereignty over the oilfields in its continental shelf in 1963 and the first drill started in 1966. Phillips Petroleum discovered the Ekofisk Field in 1969. The whole Shelf is divided into rectangular grids which are leased out for exploration and extraction. Some of the other earlier Oil and Gas fields are Frigg, Hod Valhall, Murchison, Odin and Statfjord. Chemicals used in the Oil Industry, for example anti-fouling paints, as well as drilling mud and cuttings smother life on the seabed. This together with the fact that the Total Allowance Catch are not always followed leads to the decline in fishery catches during the twentieth century.

Robert Boyle (1627 – 91) found out that the ocean depths are cold not hot. Therefore the earlier diver's suits are big because they are flooded by hot water. Air is pumped to the diver from the ship through a cord connected to his bulgy helmet in the same way that oxygen is passed from a mother to her embryo and foetus through the umbilical cord. The air contains a mixture of helium and oxygen. The helmet recovers the gas for reprocessing, for otherwise a diver would bubble away £2,000 worth of gas each day. Until 1950s the pump was turned by hand and communication was done with rope. The signals are, one tug for attention or stop, two for lower, three for heave or pull up, four for diver coming up, five for more air, six for less air and four tugs twice to say that the diver is in danger.

The boots worn by these divers have a mass of iron underneath. Each boot weighs 16 lbs. The helmet is made of copper and the dress solid sheet India rubber between two layers of tanned twill. By the early twentieth century men clad in this are at large on the bottom of the sea up to 210 foot deep.

Weather forecasting announcements have jargon of its own and a

definitive way of saying things. The museum gives a typical forecast, 'Forties, southerly five veering westerly and increasing gale Force eight, showers, good,' which means that in the area of the North Sea designated by the name *Forties* the wind blows clockwise from south to west, increasing to a gale with Beaufort Force eight. There are showers but the visibility is good.

Perhaps for the purpose of weather forecasting, the sea around the British Isles is divided into regions. These regions are sometimes named after banks, for instance Bailey, Biscay, Dogger, Fisher, Forties, Sole and Viking; sometimes after islands, namely Fair Isle, Faroes, Hebrides, North Utsire, Portland, Rockall, South Utsire and Wight; and also after river or estuary, that is Cromarty, Forth, Humber, Shannon, Thames and Tyne. There are also Malin and Finisterre both of which are named after a headland; Dover and Plymouth, after a town; Fasnet, after the rock off Ireland; German Bight, after a coast; Biscay, after a bay; and Irish Sea and South-East Iceland.

Reservoirs occur when the petroleum formed in sedimentary rocks migrates into permeable rocks, for example sandstone which is also sedimentary. These latter hold the oil like sponge. Most of the oil reserves found in UK are in Middle Jurassic Sandstones which date from around 200 million years ago. Approximately seventy per cent of North Sea oilfields date from the Jurassic period. These include Beatrice, Brent, Cormorant, Murchison and Tartan.

Similar to water absorbed in a sponge, oil permeated within sandstones can be modelled as a percolation of one phase in a fixed structure containing another phase. Here the two phases are respectively oil and water. Internal to the sandstones are pores which are filled with either water or oil. My supervisor Graham is an expert in the field of percolation as applied to Chemical Engineering. He goes to Norway a few times, and I guess it is something related to the oilfields there.

The story of the British Petroleum begins in 1909 when the Anglo-Persian Oil Company was founded. In 1967 this company acquired the chemical interests of the Distillers Company. The British Petroleum was established in 1917 as a marketing subsidiary of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. The latter changed its name into the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company in 1935, while the former became the British Petroleum Company in 1954.

Pelargic fish swim near the surface while demersal ones live deeper. *Purse seining* is a fishing technique whereby weighted nets are dropped from a ring of floats and then pulled up by a rope. *Trawling* is another technique where a great pouch of a net is dragged along by a boat, the lower rim equipped with heavy ground gear to keep them on sea bottom

while the upper rim is fitted with floats. *Drifting* is as its name implies one in which a drift net drifts with the tide. *Great lining* is a technique in fishing in which hooks are connected to the tipping which is then connected to the main line by a long thread of snood. These techniques are bad for both the fish and the people, for the latter because in the long run there will be no fish left for them. For example some of them obliterate schools of herring while others suffocate droves of dolphins.

Information on how to navigate passed from person to person. There were no books on the subject. Some of the tasks are hard work as well as dangerous, for example reefing where by sails on old ships are rolled up in bad weather. Since tonnage of the ship's cargo is registered only that part in the middle of the ship, *clipper ship* was created whose bow is longer and stern fatter. The larger compartments at the bow and stern may carry cargoes which are thereby exempted from Harbour dues. In other words they are tax-free. The first oil tanker was designed by Ludwig Nobel and built in Sweden. The Northern Lighthouse Board was established in 1786.

After the museum I walk around the city. The Provost Skene's House was opened on 30 September 1953 by H. M. Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother. It originally stood on the Guest row, one of medieval Aberdeen's principal streets set in a prosperous part of the town. The west wing of the house with its curved plaster ceiling, built in and typical of the seventeenth century, was used for entertainment. There is the Coat of Arm of Sir George Skene. The acronym IHS, which stands for 'Iesu Hominum Salvatore', appears on the wooden ceiling in the chapel. The Painted Chapel is divided into two large rooms with a narrow compartment between the low plaster 1951 ceiling hiding the original plaster board walls. The original decorative scheme is wooden ceiling and floor and the walls are plaster on wood. In 1952 the Ministry of Works for Scotland conserved the painted ceiling by filling in all the gaps. A binding mixture of wax, resin and oil was applied on the ceiling to consolidate the paint and prevent flaking, the technique which is no longer used since the wax mixture penetrates the wooden support and changes the appearance of the painting. The Second Phase of the restoration during 1971 – 72 removes all the wax. Outside the place is written, 'Residence of Sir George Skene, Provost of Aberdeen 1676 – 1685'. It has four levels, a basement and two turrets. The outside is made of stone while the inside of wood.

There is another museum on the ground which belongs to the University of Aberdeen. *Aberdeen* or *Aiberdeen* is the name of a shire. Native or citizen of this shire is called an *Aberdonian.* The word *Caledonian* means pertaining to the ancient Caledonia, the highlands of Scotland, or to Scotland in general. Here was a centre of astronomical research

back in the eighteenth century. The broadsword is a Highlanders' large two-edged sword. One of those on display here is about six feet from hilt to tip, in other words it is longer than I am tall. Another combination of weapons typical to the Scots are sword and targe, the latter of which is a small shield.

Some of the renowned figures of this city are Patricia Copland (1749 – 1822, d. 10th November), James Clark Maxwell (1831 – 1879, b. 13th November), David Ferrier (1843 – 1928, b. *13:th* January) and Rev. Alexander John Forsyth (1768 – 1843, b. 28th December, d. 11th June) who established a saving bank and also introduced the small pox vaccine to the North East. Here George Gordon Byron attended the Aberdeen Grammar School during 1794 – 8.

In Scotland the last day of the year, the 'Hogmanay', is celebrated with bonfires, divination rites and quizzing. The Marischal Museum is inside the Marischal College, one of the two colleges of Aberdeen University both of which were once an independent university. It was founded by the fifth Earl Marischal of Scotland in 1593. In the same building is the Church of Scotland.

The Church of Scotland was recognised by the state for the first time in 1560. It follows the Protestant doctrines of Calvin. In 1690 those who adhered to episcopacy formed the Episcopal Church of Scotland. The Disruption came in 1843 when a third of its ministers and members left and formed the Free Church of Scotland. The United Church of Scotland was created as a union between the United Free Church of Scotland and the Church of Scotland in 1929.

The Church of England is a member of the Anglican Communion which dissociated itself from the Roman Catholic Church in 1534 under Henry VIII. The service book is the *Book of Common Prayer* (1660) which is based on the *First Prayer Book of Edward VI* (1549). The first English translation of the Bible was by Miles Coverdale in 1535. The *King James Bible* of 1611 has long and lasting influence for its clarity and beauty. The *New English Bible* comprises the *New Testament* (1961) and the *Old Testament and Apocrypha* (1970). The *Jerusalem Bible* was compiled by Catholic scholars in 1966. The *Good News Bible* is in modern colloquial English. You may be a Catholic, but there is no need to stress the fact when you are in England. There had been bloody events in the English history with regard to the conflict between the people and the country with Roman Catholic authorities. Mary I, for instance, had killed many Protestants that people name her Bloody Mary. And bloody mary or bloody Mary is an English drink made from Vodka, tomato juice, seasonings and lemon juice. The latter two ingredients make it feminine, the tomato juice is the blood of the martyrs she killed, and vodka makes

you forget the whole thing.

A *moss* is either a boggy ground, moorland or a peat bog, the last one of which preserves organic objects. Thus a man fallen into a peat bog thousands of years ago still retains his skin, hair and facial expression. A *muir* or *mure* is either a moor or rough cultivated heathery land which was considered as part of an estate used for gun sports. Rhynie chert is a siliceous rock from Aberdeen shire that contains fossils of some of the earliest plants.

A *recumbent* is a variant of stone circle found only in the north-eastern part of Scotland, the largest block of which is laid on its edge at the south of the circle. Stone circles were used for ritual activities.

It is getting dark and I want to walk to the natural reserve on the estuary just north of Aberdeen, so I walk to the Castle beach first and from there walk along a dark promenade below the road level. It is a memorable walk in a nearly pitch-dark path, with the sound of the sea to your right and occasional faint sound of an unseen car upwards and to your left. I must have walked a few miles but still have not reached the estuary. At one point I had to go up to the road in order to cross a bridge. I decide to turn back for fear that I would miss my coach. At the coach station before boarding the coach at 7 pm to return to Glasgow I eat, then brush my teeth and rinse my mouth with a little water from my small water bottle. From Glasgow to Manchester is the usual Service 336.

Saturday 2nd November 2002, again from Manchester to Glasgow at 1:30 am, for I love Scotland. Dundee was a Victorian industrial town famous for its three J's, that is to sayl, jam, jute and journalism. For centuries it had experienced attack and plunder, and has been completely destroyed four times but each time rose again from its ashes like the phoenix. People of Dundee are called Dundonian.

I visit the museum. There are on display here musical instruments. These includes an 1814 player-piano made by Longman & Company, a 1798 square-piano by John Broadwood and a 1798 upright piano by William Southwell. There are also a bellowed pipe from Ireland, a 1761 spinet by Baker Harris and a 1771 harpsichord made by Jacob Kirkmann, a tambura from India, a zither, an Irish harp and a sarinda from India. The keyed cittern, a variant of Greek kithara dated from about 1750. The Czechoslovakian houslaka is a variant of the fiddle that is laid flat on a table for playing.

The Florentine mosaic, also known as pietre dure, is a technique of making a decorative panel by using inlaid pieces of semi-precious hard stone. The French Palissy ware is named after Bernard Palissy (*c.*1510 – 1590) who was a naturalist with particular interest in reptiles. He

made casts of reptiles and attached them to plates, then painted them with lead glazes which ran into one another during the firing process. Majolica is an Italian tin-glazed earthenware, a coarse ceramic fired at a low temperature which makes it remain porous after firing and have to be glazed to prevent it from absorbing moisture. On display here at the museum is an Italian cantagalli majolica, Cantagalli being the name of a firm near Florence during late nineteenth century. There are also Deruta ware, Istoriato ware where the entire plate is decorated with lively scene from history, mythology, the Bible or daily life. There is a Bellarmine jug dated from about 1653. This is a type of Rhenish stoneware jug, named after Cardinal Roberto Bellamine (1542 – 1621), with a moulded mask of a bearded man on its neck. There is a nineteenth-century stoneware tankard with coloured enamel of figures from the Bible. There is also a silver nef which is an example of model ships which adorned rich man's table form thirteenth century.

Electrotypes and electroplating are techniques invented during 1840s. It has been used to reproduce from masterpieces the historical metal works. A mould is put in a tank containing solution of copper salt, then electric current is applied which makes the copper deposit on to the mould. Sèvres Porcelain Factory is the French National Porcelain factory founded in 1738. It created the Empire style in ceramics, which is the late Neo-Classic style associated with the tastes of Napolean I. There are stained glass works by William Morris & Co. from nineteenth century.

A double-bladed dagger which is in effect two daggers connected to each other at an obtuse angle. The fist shield is used for parrying. The blade of the talwar or sabre could vary greatly in quality, curvature and size. It is the commonest fighting sword used in India. Kris is Malay in origin and is used both for fighting and for fencing.

There is a special exhibition of shoes, I think of works by a Dundonian James McIntosh Patrick (1907 – 1998). There is a variety of shoes, for instance wooden paduka, rawhide sandal, thick leather chappal sandal, mules, 19^{th}-century fibre sandal from Japan, raffia sandals from 19^{th}-century China, Japanese Geta, brogue, Pakistani majori, women's Golden Lotus slippers from late 19^{th}-century Han Chinese. Paduka is a toe knob sandal. Clogs are Dutch, wooden and huge. Then there are platform shoes.

There is an exhibition called 'Shoe' by Kathy Fawcett and team from Leicester and at Dundee's McManus Gallerie there is one by Jenny Stolzenberg whose work represents shoes from Holocaust victims. I have myself seen a hill of shoes on display at Auschwitz, so I know what it feels like to be standing before such a sight. She puts it, 'I couldn't move

my lips to talk, or my arms to wipe away the tears. I could only look'. 'I imagined that if each owner of each pair of shoes could be named, then they would be brought back to life,' she writes, 'You should go to the past, looking not for messages or warnings, but simply to be humbled'. Men are wonderful creatures. Our philosophies are derived from blood, our love from fear.

Jute is used to make rope like the Manila rope and hessian sackcloth. The heyday of the jute industry here was before World War I. During 1860 – 1960 jute defined Dundee, and in 1901 nearly half of the working population worked in textiles. 'Twa for a shillin', three for a Boab,' it was said in the Green Market.

Until late in 19th century bathing was usually done in a bedroom or dressing room using a portable bath and hot water provided by servants. A fire was sometimes lit for comfort. Very few house were built with bathroom, even large mansions at Camperdown House had none. Houses in the city back then have *pletties*, which are platforms providing access to the flats on each floor. The *greenie pole* carried a number of lines, each one of which is strung from an individual flat and on which you hang clothes out to dry.

Here the Scots, or Scotti as they were called by the Romans, came from Ireland 1,100 years ago. They spoke Gaelic and called themselves Gaels. Then 900 years ago came the Normans among the relics of whose are a motte and bailey castle. Before the Scots came there were the Picts who were descendants of the people who built hillforts and souterrains. The Romans called them Picti, perhaps meaning painted people or people of the designs. That was 1,700 years ago and no Pictish documents survive.

Souterrains are long, curving, underground passages built during the last century BC and the first century AD. Probably used to store foods or to house animals, they are normally found when there is also evidence of houses built on the surface. Hillfort settlements built after 800 BC had wall of stones, earth and timber. To make the surface level a layer of turf was placed on top. Log boat or skin boat is made such that it resembles a shell of log with a big groove running the whole length and opening at one end. This end is then fitted with a stern board which closes the opening. Such boats are as wide as the logs themselves. From these an extended log boat was developed in which planks were added to the sides of a log boat, thus increasing its capacity. These eventually became a wooden with the traditional pattern based on a long wooden keel.

The real-size model of the Douglasmuir House looks similar to those pre-historic houses found in Japan where there is a ring ditch, no chimney, thatch for roof resting on rafters supported by ring beams which

rest on top of posts. The Balfarg henge monument at Glenrothes, Fife, dates back to 2,500 years BC. Middens are refuse heaps. They contain the remains of deer, wild cattle, shell fish and fish. The first camp of the Morton Middens was built before 6,000 BC.

South of Dundee is the Mill Observatory built on a hill. The 37-inches Schmidt Cassegrain is the largest one ever built. The colours of the trees on the hill are wonderful. It was the idea of the Dundonian philosopher Thomas Dick, that every city should have a public observatory. Mills Observatory was built in 1935. Named after John Mills (1806 – 89), it is the only public observatory in U.K. The telescopes were built by Grubb Parsons of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, namely the 18″Grubb reflector (1935 – 50), the 19″Schmidt Cassegrain (1950 – 52) and the 10″Cooke refractor (1952 – present) which dates back to 1871.

It is getting dark when I walk back to Dundee. By the sea there is on display the Royal Research Ship 'Discovery' on which Captain Scott went on his Antarctic expedition. It was built in 1901 when Scott was 33 years old, and returned to Dundee in 1986. Some notable Dundonians not already mentioned are Williamina Paton Fleming, Robert Graham, Thomas Henderson, James Bowman Lindsay, Malcolm Longair, George Lowdon and Patrick Stevenson. James Chalmers invented the adhesive postage stamp, Janet Keillor the marmalade while James Bowman Lindsay pioneered electric light and telegraphy.

On display are minerals related to meteorites, for example tektites and moldavites from river Moldau in the former Czechoslovakia, Australites, and Indochinites from the plain of Japs and Laos. From Dundee to Glasgow by the 20:25 Service 592 and form there onwards to Manchester at 11 pm by Service 336 is uneventful. While waiting for a coach in Glasgow I usually walk around in circle in the vicinity of the station, eat and brush my teeth.

Friday 8 November 2002, at five past midnight on Service 422 to London and then on Service 020 at 7 am from there to Canterbury. What a day it was Yesterday! I went to the Main Building and met two of my past teachers, Martin and John, both of whom I have not met for such a long time. They used to teach me back in 1994 and 1995 at the master level. Then I went to see Muriel who asked me, 'What's the problem?', to which I said, 'No problems!'. I must have been somewhat problemsome. I only wanted to have a letter to tell Singapore Airlines that I am finishing my degree and about to go home, and therefore need some extra weight allowance for my luggage. I shall come to learn that more often this does not help. The written weight limit is an absurd 25 kgs. By asking beforehand for an increased allowance they will make double-sure that yours never exceed 35 kgs, whereas otherwise you could

often carry as much as 50 kgs with you. Similarly if you ask for fragile labels to be put on your luggage, they usually make you sign a form waiving any responsibility if a damage occurs to the things inside your bags.

The coach station in Canterbury is small and sits near the city wall, a park and pedestrian area of the town. There is Mark and Spencer but then again there are Mark and Spencer's wherever you go.

The West Gate incorporates battered plinths to the circular towers which are now almost buried in the wide road bridge, portcullis, a draw bridge, heavy gates, battlements and machicolations – murder holes – above the gate. There are eighteen gunloops or 'Gunholes', the earliest recorded in Britain. Guns were placed at Westgate by 1404.

The museum and gallery are in the same building together with a public library. People are already standing in front of front door twenty minutes before the appointed opening hour. I try the door and find out that it is locked. Turning back I suddenly find myself being looked down by all the people standing in the queue, so embarrassed I go for a walk along the streets and canals before coming back to the museum. The Canterbury Cathedral usually has an Evensong at 5:30 pm except on Saturday when it is at 3:15 pm, but the main service which comprises the compline and Eucharist are at 11 am. Apart from these services and prayers, the Church is open to the tourists for a fee.

At the gallery there are paintings by Cooper who paints animals. His running horses, however, conform to the contemporary believe then that galloping horses stretch mid-air with all four feet above the ground. That was the time before moving animals had been photographed. Eadweard Muybridge (1830 – 1904) devised a way of photographing movement in consecutive steps which allows us to see how horses really look when galloping. His books, for example *Animal Locomotion* published in 1837, shows that all four feet of a horse are only off the ground together when they are closest not farthest apart. This discovery of his has changed the way prancing ponies are painted.

The name 'Riding Gate' is an Old English name which means *red gate.* It was built during AD 270 –76 as one of the six principal gates. The gate was destroyed in 1782.

Both Thatcher and Blair are great coiners of phrases alike. For example the former once said, 'He puts his integrity before his ambition', while the latter used to say before his first successful prime-ministerial election that we need not only to pursue a policy of *tea for two* but also to make sure there will be *two for tea.* And, well, this is not Kiwi for this is Kent, but now I know that the accents of people in these two places are similar to each other. As far as I am concerned Kent accent is

the same as Kiwi accent. I go back to London in the evening, and from there on to Manchester at 10:30 pm on Service 540 from Victoria coach station.

Wednesday 13 November 2002, what a day indeed! This is not my day. Last night I went to a job presentation by Logica at Malmaison Hotel. The company has merged with another one recently and is tightening its belt. Good food and wine were served and I came back and fell asleep in front of a computer in B9 and missed my coach at 1:30 am by 25 minutes. So Aviemore is out of question. What a pity, the weather is very nice today. But I got on the 336 Penzance coach at 3:45 am to go to Birmingham. This coach came one hour late. Why couldn't the one to Glasgow do some thing similar? I buy a ticket for Portree and hope that the weather will not be too bas on Saturday. From Birmingham to London the coach arrives one hour and a half late. From London I go to Bath. The coach from Birmingham to London was the 8:00 Service 420 and from London to Bath Spa the 12:30 Service 403.

It is much easier to go to Bath from London than to go there from, say, Bristol. For one thing, there is no National Express coaches from the latter there. The town is 106 miles west of London. Industries include tourism, plastics and printing. On this site used to be the Roman town Aquae Sulis which means *water of Sul*, the British goddess of wisdom. It boasts the only natural hot mineral springs in Britain and in the 18^{th} century flourished for its spa. The baths were closed to the public in 1977. The University of Bath was established in 1966. It was here that William Herschel discovered Uranus.

Bath Abbey was built in 1499 to the style of Perpendicular Gothic on the site of a Saxon abbey that was founded in 775 and in which in 973 Edgar was crowned the first king of all England. Jane Austen (1775 – 1817) lived here from 1801 to 1809, and there is here a society named after her, the Jane Austen foundation. All the buildings in Bath were built around this time when people moved here following the believe that water from the geothermal spring here could cure diseases. Bath is famous for the splendour of its Georgian architecture examples of which are the Royal Crescent and the Circus. These buildings are built from golden yellow stone, the Bath stone, according to the planning laid out for the town. The Romans built bathing facilities here because of the geothermal springs. After they were gone the town decreased in its importance until the rush due to the medicinal property of the water from the springs mentioned.

I walk to a market and then the river where there is a sunken park. But it is already dark and the park's gate is closed. I buy a litre of lemonade and some cooked turkey from Waitrose in the Podium on Northgate

Street.

Bath is situated in a valley, isolated from the world outside. At night there are no lights on the hills surrounding it, and apart from those lights from the city itself everywhere is darkness. I return to London at 6:30 pm when it is already pitch dark. Before getting on the coach I had some trouble finding the coach station. Then from London to Manchester it is by the 11:30 pm Service 422.

Saturday 16th November 2002, go to Glasgow on the 1:30 am Service 336, then change at 7 am into Service 916 to go to Portree. From Portree to Inverness there is a Service 917, but I shall have to do it some other time with a Scottish Rail Pass, that is Citylink's Explorer Pass. The name of Portree in Gaelic is Portrigh. It is on the Isle of Skye. We pass Glen Cloe just before reaching Fort William. There is the same Safeway again because the coach stops here for fifteen minutes to change the driver. The scenery after Fort William becomes more and more beautiful. Most of the time there are lakes. I change my seat from one side of the aisle to another and back again several times just to have a look at each of the lakes, which at one time is on one side of the coach and at another time another.

The coach stops at a bus stop on a small square. Nearby is a *Banca na h'alba* or the Bank of Scotland. It takes a few minutes to walk to the Tourist Information office, and a few more from there to the sea. In Scottish the name of the town is Portrigh. There is a pleasant walk on each side of the town along the sea, I was told. I choose the one to the north or on your left facing the bay, which is the closest one of the two. A paved path winds its way along the sea, then ends at a small ravine and follows it up the hill. I climb to nearly as high as the path could go. The way ahead must lead eventually back towards Portree, but it seems to go further away from the town so I turn back and return the same way I came. And it is well that I do, for I could barely reach there ten minutes before my coach leaves at 3:20 pm for Glasgow. I shop at a Safeway along the way. At Fort William the coach stops for half an hour beside another, bigger Safeway. As usual I buy something here again, and so does everybody. It is always Roddy who drives between Portree and Fort William. The route is a very scenic one, but since he must be driving most days I am not sure whether he enjoys it. Here another driver takes over the coach to drive us back to Glasgow.

Tuesday 19 November 2002, today is a trip to Aviemore, a sports and tourist centre in the Highland. It is 28 miles southeast of Inverness and lies adjacent to the Cairngorm Mountains. Again I travel from Manchester to Glasgow's Buchanan coach station. This time I change my coach at Buchanan to go to Aviemore by the 7:15 Service 592 which

goes all the way to Inverness. Aviemore is a small town and our coach passes it easily in no time that I do not even notice it is there. By the time I know I have missed my stop we are already approaching Inverness. There is a random checking of tickets, obviously because one passenger has bought a ticket to go to Aviemore but did not get off there. No one asks to see my ticket, however, but when I ask the driver whether we have already passed Aviemore he exclaims, 'So you are the one!' In no time I find myself on a new coach, altogether another service to the one I came by, heading for my destination. This time coming from Inverness it is very easy to find since it is the first place we stop.

The coach stops here in front of a police station, and I walk further along the road passing a supermarket, a hotel and some shops to come to the tourist information centre. There are Lairig Ghru and Glen Einich in the vicinity. There are wonderful walks around two lakes that are connected to each other by a small stream. Here, close to where the lakes connect I sit and have some bread with marmite. There is nothing like eating marmite sandwiches in a cold and cloudy day with a pine forest behind you and in front you a large lake. Then I walk around the smaller one of the lakes where the path often passes along or on a marsh. There are water plants and reeds. At one place the whole bay is a swamp on which the path is paved. The way back passes a plain where there are also tracks for riding horse. I met one elderly couple twice. Once just before reaching the first lake and again on the way back when it is almost dark. They probably stay at a hotel on the large plot of ground to the right of the path the lanterns in the garden of which give a wonderful sight at night.

Back on the main road and already dark there is nothing much to do. So I follow the road some way and then come back. I find the Youth Hostel nearby. There is a path next to it which leads to a nature reserve. I sit on a lawn by the road to have some more sandwiches and watch the valley in the dark. The moon is in the sky but it is often hidden behind the cloud. I buy bananas, chocolate cake, pesto pasta, salad dressing and shortbread at a Tesco nearly one hour before the coach to Glasgow arrives at 6:58 pm from Inverness.

Tesco is a supermarket chain that was founded by Jack Cohen (1898 – 1979) in 1931 in London. The name comes from his name and the name of his supplier, T E S Stockwell. By 1998 it had 160,000 staffs and 600 stores.

Manchester to Edinburgh, Sunday 24 November. The Service 336 coach stops as usual at Glasgow, after which it passes along Loch Lomond and for a long while keeps that lake on its right before turns into a motorway. Dawn comes when we reach the lake, and the scenery there at

that hour is splendid. It is the largest freshwater lake in the country, 21 miles long and with the area of 27 square miles. It is situated in the Strathclyde region and is linked to the Clyde estuary. It is set in dramatic mountain scenery, and is being watched over by the 3,192 ft Ben Lomond standing nearby. Loch Lomond often appears in romantic traditional songs where lovers lamenting lost love recall memories of happy time spent with their lovers on its banks.

Edinburgh is the capital of Scotland while Glasgow its principal city. It sits near the southern shore of the Firth of Forth. Among the industries here are printing, distilling, brewing and banking. In the vicinity of the city are Water of Leith, Salisbury Crags and Arthur's Seat.

During the Roman occupation in the first century BC a pre-Celtic tribe occupied northern Scotland and successfully resisted the Romans' effort to conquer them. The latter called them *Picts* which probably means painted or tattooed. These people are thought to have inhabited much of England before the Celtic Britons arrived. They spoke a Celtic language which died out in about the 10th century. During the fifth and the sixth centuries the Britons, English and Scots established themselves in the country and repelled the Picts to the north. St Columba (521 – 597), an Irish Christian abbot who founded monasteries and churches in Ireland, came to Scotland in 563 as a missionary. Together with 12 companions he sailed to Iona, an island in the Inner Hebrides, and founded a monastery there which later played a leading part in the conversion of Britain. The feast day for St Columba is 9 June.

Castle Rock in Edinburgh was already inhabited during Bronze and Iron Age. In about 617 the site was taken by Edwin of the Angles of Northumbria who built the fortress of Din Eidin from the name of which the present name of the city is derived. In 843 the Scottish King Kenneth MacAlpin reigned over both the Scots and the Picts. During 1005 – 1034 Malcolm II realised the unification of Scotland. Robert the Bruce (1274 – 1329, reigned 1306 – 29) made Edinburgh the capital in 1325 and a burgh in 1329. He also established its port at Leith. The city was destroyed by the English in 1544 and 1547.

Amazingly for the capital of a country there is no coach stations whatever, and all coaches stop at bus stances on St Andrew Square. I cross over the train terminal on North Bridge and then turn left on to High Street and walk along the Royal Mile until I reach the medieval John Knox House. It was built in 1556 and bears the inscription, 'LYFE·GOD·ABVFE·AL·AND·YI·NYCHTBOVR – AS·YI·SELF' It was the home of James Mossman who was the Goldsmith to Mary Queen of Scots (1542 – 1587). I walk on and then turn right towards Arthur's Seat. There are construction works going on all over Edin-

burgh. At one of these sites near the Palace of Holyrood house are wall boards put up all around with a poem from *The Brus* (1374 – 75) by John Barbour (*c.*1320 – 1395) written on it in big letters,

> A! Fredome is a noble thing
> Fredome mays man to haiff liking;
> Fredome all solace to man giffis,
> he levys at ese that frely levys!

There have been two queens of England whose name is Mary, namely Mary I (1516 – 1558) or Bloody Mary and Mary II (1662 – 1694). Mary I was a devout Catholic who in 1554 married Philip II of Spain and sanctioned the persecution of Protestants. She was Queen of England from 1553. Mary II was Queen of England, Ireland and Scotland from 1688. She married in 1677 her cousin William of Orange. Queen Mary (1867 – 1953) was a queen but no Queen of England. She was the consort of George V of Great Britain and Ireland, to whom she married in 1893 after his brother and her fiancé Prince Albert Victor died in 1892. Mary Queen of Scots was a Catholic who married three times, two of which were to the dauphin who later became Francis II and to her cousin the Earl of Darnley in 1565. Mary Rose, however, is not a person but the name of an English warship built for Henry VIII of England. On 19 July 1545 it sank off Southsea causing the loss of nearly all of the 700 on board. Located in 1971 the wreck was raised for preservation then moved in 1982 to Portsmouth where she was built.

Unlike in USA where roads are cut straight in rectangular grids, streets in most old towns in the UK seem to be designed in order to make it difficult for strangers to find his way around. Whether this was done on purpose for security reason one never knows.

Among the intellects of the city are Adam Smith (1723 – 1790) who wrote *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) and is said to have founded political economy, David Hume (1711 – 1776) whose *Treatise of Human Nature* is the core of British empiricism, and Joseph Black (1728 – 1799) who discovered carbon dioxide and the bicarbonates, hydrogen carbonates. James Hutton (1726 – 1797) demonstrated how the rocks of Salisbury Crags had been formed from hot molten material through the theory he developed in 1785 on the igneous origin of many rocks. Known as the *founder of geology*, he formulated the uniformitarianism concept which says that past events can be explained in terms of processes that work today. Thus the dolerite sill of the Salisbury Crags was formerly molten rock. The Hutton's Section of the sill has been greatly reduced by quarrying.

Arthur's Seat is a hill of volcanic origin to the east of Edinburgh. It

is at Latitude 55° 56′ 43″.8 N, Longitude 3° 9′ 38″.3 W at the height of 250.5 m. It forms the core of Holyrood Park and can be approached from various directions the easiest way of which is from Dunsappie Loch to the south. From here one can see the Mouth of the Forth, Lammermuirs and Pentlands. Craigowl (455 m) is at a distance 67.6 km away while Inchkeith Lighthouse (56 m) at 10.1 km.

I climb up to the top of Arthur's Seat by the steps and a road that runs along side the cliff. It is a fine day and there are quite a few people walking. The path I follow leads eventually to a lake where there are many ducks, seats and paved paths. Then I climb up the hill again, walk along the various paths some of which are very pleasant, and follow the edge of a gentle slope which ends in steep cliffs that drop spectacularly to the roads below. These cliffs represent a cross-section of a stack of slabs of the rocks underlying the hill, and therefore are jagged and uneven all over. I must have branched off on to a wrong path at some point, for I suddenly find myself confronted with a shear drop of turfed moist ground. Instead of turning back I scramble down the slippery slope, and as a result get both of my hands and my trousers soiled with a reasonable amount of excitement.

I walk back to town. At a corner of a crossroad stands a museum which used to be a church. Tron Kirk was built on top of buildings of Marlin's Wynt II. Around 1600 the city's population increased, thus resulting in extensive caves below. It was designed by John Mylne under the commission of Charles I of Britain. But Charles was beheaded before the Kirk was completed. During the Covenanting revolution, civil war and Cromwell's occupation of Edinburgh the construction work was slowed down. It was open for worship in 1647 and finally completed in 1663. The Great Fire of Edinburgh in 1824 spread along Royal Mile and into Cowgate. The Blaze burned for three days, inspiring James Braidwood to start Britain's first municipal fire department. In 1828 Tron steeple was rebuilt and the church was closed for worship in 1952. Here people come and celebrate the Hogmanay, Scottish name for New Year's Eve.

The Old Town is shaped like a bottle with Royal Mile running down the length of it in the middle. Along this street are the old Parliament House (1632 – 40), now the seat of the supreme courts, and St Giles' Cathedral. Both are on the Parliament Close, built in late Gothic style and renovated between 1772 and 1883. Closes are narrow lanes which descend in regular rows from the main street, usually less than 7 feet wide at the entrance. Those which a carriage could pass through are called *wynds*. The new site for the new Scottish Parliament is adjacent to Holyrood House on the Royal Mile. The National Library of Scotland and the Edinburgh Public Library are on the George IV Bridge. After

the Act of Union which resulted in the Union of England and Scotland in 1707 the Jacobites rebelled unsuccessfully in 1715 and again in 1745 when they took the town from 15 September to 31 October but could not take the castle. George IV visited the city in 1822, the first sovereign to do so since 1650. At the suggestion of Walter Scott he wore a kilt, and in so doing won much popularity.

There are three universities in Edinburgh. The University of Edinburgh was established in 1583, the Hariot-Watt University in 1885 and received the university status in 1966, and Napier University. Both the Royal Scottish Academy and the National Gallery of Scotland are designed by William Henry Playfair (1789 – 1857) in Classical style. The Museum of Scotland was opened next to the Royal Museum in 1998, making them two among the various National Museums of Scotland. It looks formidable on the outside but is beautifully well-organised inside. It has several floors each of which is divided into sections. At the entrance of one of the sections on the ground floor there is written on the wall words from John Barbour's *The Brus*.

> For we fight not for glory, nor riches, nor honours, but for freedom alone, which no good man gives up except with his life.
>
> *Declaration of Arbroath*, 1320

One of the items on display here is a gold coronation ampulla dated 1633. It was used for holding the sacred anointing oil. The Maiden was a beheading machine that for 145 years had done service a job which could have become messy if carried out by an axe. There are the basket-hilted broadsword and the two-handed Lowland sword with clam shell guards, both dated from the 16th century. For tormenting there are the steel thumbscrews, manacles with chains and branks, with iron gag which have a steel plate projecting on top of the tongue and were used for those suspected of being witches.

There is a Peden's mask, worn by preachers in the 17th century. These masks are named after Alexander Peden who preached illegally because Charles II in 1662 declared himself head of the Scottish Church. They are made of leather and have holes for the eyes, nostrils and mouth. The Coigrich is a silver gilt crozier shrine.

Arbroath is a town in Angus, on the east coast of Scotland, 16 miles northeast of Dundee. It lies at the mouth of Brothock Water. On 26 April 1320 the Declaration of Arbroath was signed by the Scottish Parliament in Arbroath Abbey. Probably written by Bernard de Linton, it proclaims their loyalty to King Robert I (The Bruce) and Scotland's independence from England and from the Pope.

> Quia quamdiu Centum ex nobis viri remanserit, nuncquam Anglorum dominio aliquatenus volumus subiugari.
>
> which means
>
> As long as only one hundred of us remain alive we will never on any conditions be brought under the English rule.

There is an iron caltrop found at Bannockburn. It is a piece of iron with four-pronged spikes, used to injure cavalry. The four prongs form a tetrahedron structure. They meet each other at the centre of the tetrahedron. The lines joining the tips of these prongs together form sides. Thus there are six sides to each caltrop.

There are a leather tawse for belting children, a *New Crown Jewel* mangle for pressing linen and *The Capital* washboard; a pair of snuffers that come with handles like those of scissors, a chamber candlestick and snuffer, and a wax jack and snuffer; knives with pistol-, canon- and baluster grips; Toddy ladle with whalebone handle, a pair of wire-work toast racks, tea urn, an epergne which is put in the centre of a formal dinner setting for displaying fruits and various delicacies, tankards, a Monteith, and a scallop shell basket for holding bread or cake.

Among renowned Scots are John Logie Baird (b. Helensburgh, 1888; d. Bexhill, Sussex, 1946) who pioneered television; Alexander Graham Bell (b. Edinburgh, 1847; d. Baddeck, Canada, 1922) who invented the telephone in 1876 and a wireless transmission using selenium crystals in a photophone; William Murdoch (1754 – 1839) who worked for Watt and Matthew Boulton on steam engines and developed gas lighting; William Symington (1763 – 1831) who in 1787 invented the steam road locomotive, in 1788 steamboat engine and in 1802 the steamboat *Charlotte Dundas*; Sir William Thomson (Lord Kelvin; b. 1824 in Belfast; d. 1907 in Netherhall, Strathclyde) who developed the theory of gas and who said, 'I never satisfy myself until I can make a mechanical model of a thing. If I can make a mechanical model I can understand it'; James Watt (b. Greenock, 1736; d. Heathfield, near Birmingham, 1819) who made Newcomen's engine more efficient by separating the condenser from the piston cylinder and a double-acting, *parallel motion* machine that supplies power in both direction.

During the 18th and 19th centuries many people were leaving Scotland. On the southeastern coast of the middle island of Aotearoa or New Zealand a town was proposed by George Renuie who wanted to help the destitute and unemployed. Dunedin was founded in 1848 and by 1870 had become the largest town in New Zealand. Rev. Donald W. Stuart was the first minister of the Knox Church there. The city retains Scottish identity and its devotion to Robert Burn.

Peat, yeast and alcohol mature in oak for at least three years before it can be legally called *whisky*. It is usually aged for 4 to 12 years in wooden casks. The 5-10 per cent alcohol which comes from the sugary mixture and yeast in the Washback is fed to a big pot shaped like a flask, which is then heated. Alcohol boils easier than water and its evaporated phase is fed into the Worm, a spiralling copper pipe bathed in cold running water inside a column. It takes eight hours for all the vapour to condense. The Worm is a condenser which converts gaseous alcohol into liquid. The spirit leaving it goes to the Spirit Safe. You call the American or Irish *whiskey* with an *e*, but the Canadian or Scotch *whisky* without one. Scotch whisky is made from malted barley, Irish whiskey usually from barley, and bourbon and North American whiskey from maize and rye.

There are between 600 and 800 different flavour compounds in whisky. These are mainly alcohols, aldehydes, esters and fatty acids. In Scotch whisky barley is malte and then heated over a peat fire. The drying with peat gives the malt a distinctive flavour compared with other types of whisky or whiskey. The product is mixed with water to make a mash, fermented into beer, distilled twice to make whiskey at 70 per cent alcohol, and then added with water until its alcoholic content is 43 per cent by volume. For Irish whiskey the malt is not heat by the peat fire, and therefore has no smoky quality. It is distilled three times. Both the Irish and the Scotch whiskies are usually blended. Pure malt whisky is expensive.

American whiskey began in the 18^{th} century. Here barley malt, maize and rye are made into a beer, distilled to 80 per cent alcohol, reduced with water to 50-52 %, and the aged in charred white-oak barrels. Bourbon has a characteristic flavour of maize. Canadian whisky is made since early 19^{th} century from mashes of malted barley, maize, wheat and rye. Straight whisky contains whiskies of the same distillery or period, while blended whisky is a mixture of neutral products with straight whiskies and may contain sherry, fruit juice and other flavours. The alcoholic contents by volume of the spirit safe is measured using a hydrometer. Bubbles arise after 40-60 hours of fermentation when all sugar turns into alcohol.

There is on display a model of the SS Nerbudda, the first rotary printing press made by the printer Thomas Nelson in 1850. Exhibited at the Great Exhibition London, 1851, it could print 10,000 double sized printer sheets per hour, but the quality was not good enough for book printing. Here is a big hall the ground floor of which is a large open space showing exhibitions of computer games, while the first floor where I am now braces itself with the walls on all four sides, leaving a hole in the middle,

which makes itself look like a ring or balconies from where you can see the exhibition space below. The balcony on this side has all the models of the ships and boats. There are, for example models of a reed raft, a log raft, an Inuit kayaks from Greenland and an Irish west coast curragh. The Ojibwa Indian canoes from Canada, dated to earlier than 1875, is educating to see. It is made by gathering up each of the two shorter ends of a rectangular piece of leather or hind together and seal it. Then put several ribs in to keep the boat in shape and you have a stylish, streamlined canoe. There are models of an outrigger canoe from Gilbert Island, an Egyptian ship *c.*1500 BC, and a round Gufa from Bagdhad. This last item is interesting. It is made of spirals of reed ropes. The outer surface is pitched. There is neither head nor tail, and it can be rowed on any side. The model of a Greek trieme dates back to *c.*300 BC while that of a Roman grain ship with its triangular top sails and the bowsprit sail *c.*200 AD. The Chinese sea-going junk has flat sails. The mat sails fixed to top and bottom booms are stiffened by battens. Now the sailing ships look grander and grander, from the Portuguese Carrack to the Scottish Merchant ship. The last one is a full-rigged ship with its 3-masted square sails on all masts. It usually has triangular staysails before the masts and a gaffsail on the mizzen mast. The largest wingspan and one of the most magnificent of all birds is the wandering albatross, Diomedea exulans, family Diomedeidae. Its wingspan can reach 3.6 metres. There are on display stuffed Lammergeier, Gypaetus barbatus, *fam.* Accipitridae, aka bearded vulture which digests bones completely in two days; the kiwi, *fam.* Apterygidae, the eggs of which each weighs 25 per cent of the female's weight; the edible-nest swiftlet found in Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia and Java, Aerodramus fuciphagus, *fam.* Apodidae, which uses saliva to the extreme; Luth or leathery turtle, Dermochelys coriacea (Vandelli), found in tropical and sub tropical oceans; Anaconda, Eunectes murinus (Linnaeus), from tropical South America, called 'bull-killer' it gives a live birth; and Indian python, Python molurus (Linnaeus).

With the door of the museum closing behind me, I walk to the Princes Street and then along it. This is one of the two thoroughfares in Edinburgh, the other one being the Royal Mile. Then I explore the streets and roads of the New Town. There is a theatre with high glass walls. It is quite cold walking the streets here at this time of the year. Luckily I have not long to wait, for the coach leaves at 9:30 pm to Manchester.

The Order of the Thistle is an ancient Scottish Order of Chivalry. With the initials KT and a green ribbon it was created in 1687. Its motto is 'nemo me impune lacessit', which means *no one provokes me with impunity.* Only 16 people may hold this order at one time.

Before the unification, monarchs in Scotland include Donald II and Malcolm I (943 – 954). The Scottish monarchs since the unification of Scotland to the union of crowns when James VI of Scotland became James I of England are shown in the following. Starting from the *Celtic Kings* we have in 1005 – 34 Malcolm II (*c.*954 – 1034), 1034 – 40 Duncan I (d. 1040) the Gracious, 1040 – 57 Macbeth (*c.*1005 – 1057), 1057 – 93 Malcolm III (*c.*1031 – 1093) Canmore, 1093 – 94 Donald III (*c.*1039 – *c.*1100) Donalbane or Bane *i.e.fair*, 1094 Duncan II, 1094 – 1107 Edgar (1097 – 1107), 1107 – 24 Alexander I (*c.*1078 – 1124) the Fierce, 1124 – 53 David I (1084 – 1153), 1153 – 65 Malcolm IV (1141 – 1165) the Maiden, 1165 – 1214 William (1143 – 1214) the Lion, 1214 – 49 Alexander II (1198 – 1249) the Peaceful, 1249 – 86 Alexander III (1241 – 1286), and 1286 – 90 Margaret (1283 – 1290) the Maid of Norway. Then comes the *English Domination* during 1292 – 96 by John de Baliol (*c.*1249 – 1315) and during 1296 – 1306 the throne was annexed to England. The *House of Bruce* has during 1306 – 29 Robert I (1274 – 1329) the Bruce and during 1329 – 71 David II (1324 – 1371). The *House of Stuart* comprises in 1371 – 90 Robert II (1316 – 1390), 1390 – 1406 Robert III (*c.*1340 – 1406), 1406 – 37 James I (1394 – 1437), 1437 – 60 James II (1430 – 1460), 1460 – 88 James III (1451 – 1488), 1488 – 1513 James IV (1473 – 1513), 1513 – 42 James V (1512 – 1542), 1542 – 67 Mary (1542 – 1587) Mary Queen of Scots or Mary Stuart, and 1567 – 1625 James VI (1566 – 1625) which covers the union of the crowns in 1603.

Scotland the Brave is the song the tune of which I have heard since I was 16 going on 17. I was in New Zealand then. We had a bagpipe band, and they played this tune while they marched on the Australia-New Zealand Army Corps on Monday 25th April 1983 day to the monument in downtown Ashburton.

Hark here the night is falling
Hark hear the pipes a calling
Loudly and proudly calling down thru the glen
There here the blood a leaping
High as the spirits of the old highland men

Towering in gallant fame
Scotland my mountain hame
High may your proud standards gloriously wave
Land of my high endeavour
Land of the shining river
Land of my heart forever, Scotland the Brave

High in the misty mountains
Out by the purple highlands

Brave are the hearts that beat beneath Scottish skies
Wild are the winds to meet you
Staunch are the friends that greet you
Kind as the love that shines fro fair maidens eyes.

With this my Scottish spirit rises and I would not rest until the *Flower of Scotland* is here. It is the Scottish National Anthem.

Although modern, this anthem commemorates the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314 when the Scottish Army under Robert (I) the
Bruce King of Scots defeated Edward II, King of England.

O Flower of Scotland, When will we see Your like again
That fought and died for, Your wee bit Hill and Glen...

The Hills are bare now, and Autumn leaves lie thick and still
O'er land that is lost now, Which those so dearly held...

Those days are past now, And in the past they must remain
But we can still rise now, And be the nation again...

Flower of Scotland, When will we see Your like again
That fought and died for, Your wee bit Hill and Glen
And stood against him, Proud Edward's Army
And sent him homeward, Tae think again.

Among the words originating in Scots are *wee, bonnie, glamour* and *raid.*

It is amazing how teachings of most of the religions and philosophies I know seem to me not merely similar but exactly the same. One may begin by looking at Christianity, Islam and Judaism, all of which has only one and the same God. In Judaism you pray directly to God, and likewise in Islam. That is to say, you reach God by no one except yourself. In Christianity the situation is somewhat more complicated. Here there is no single bible but two bibles, that is the Old- and the New Testaments, the theme of the former being Fear whereas that of the latter Love. In the Old Testament one may reach directly this God that one regards with fear, thus the term *God-fearing people.* What Jesus teaches us in the New Testament amounts mainly to, 'No one comes to My Father except through Me'. If one only takes away the quotation marks, then His *Me* and *My* become conversely the reader's *my* and *me.* Whether one is aware of it or not, this technique of a *Reader's Me* is by no means unusual in Literature. It is an enormously effective technique which may provide a good explanation to many other things, for example the saying, 'You are what you read', and why written words are usually more convincing than spoken ones.

In a way, God is our consciousness or subconsciousness. *For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.* (John, 12: 49,50) Not only does God create us, but he is here with us, everywhere and within us. One must hold true to one's faith and and believe in one's self. *And yet if I judge, my judgement is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.* (John, 8: 16) When I pray, I talk to God in my own mind. You do not talk to God together as a crowd but individually. In prayers lies the strength of our thought which others have no access to. They have a similar thing of their own. *But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.* (Matthew, 6: 6) Jesus died, but he dies not. He lives always in us who believe in him. And since he is in his Father, similarly I am also in my Father, I who believe in Him. *Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.* (John, 14: 19, 20) If you believe in God, you also believe in Jesus, you also believe in yourself. *Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.* (John, 14: 1) And as soon as we believe in Jesus's words, every *me* he uses becomes our *me*, that is it means each one of us to ourselves alone. *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.* (John, 14: 6)

In Bhagavati Gītā the king Arajuna hears voices from a god telling him first to do his duty and then to *follow no one but Me.* Following the same line of the above argument, I reason that this *Me* is not the *speaker*, that is god, but the *listener*, that is Arajuna himself. Our hearing is in fact our repeating things we hear to ourselves. A German, following the same line of thinking but looking at things from another angle, says, 'Wie soll ich wissen, was ich sage, befor ich höre, was ich rede', that is to say, 'How could know what I say before I hear what I speak'. Buddha's teaching is exactly the same with the teaching of all the above religions, except that he puts it in a much simpler and straight-forward manner, 'No one comes to the Truth except through himself'. Amen or Ṣadhu, whichever. And *quod erat demonstrandum.*

For our God is a consuming fire. (Hebrew, 12: 29) For the proof and explanation of this I refer to the cosmological theory of Big Bang,

B^2FH†, and the *Worlds in Collision* (1950) by Immanuel Velikovsky.

The sunken garden at Piccadilly is now raised, redesigned and turned into a modern garden with an attractive forest of fountains where children run among spouting sprouts of water in the heat of summer. The Manchester Infirmary used to stand on this site which was demolished in 1909, the cheap solution after the demolition of which was the sunken garden, one of the homes of the homeless. It was in this newly-built Infirmary that Ann Lee, born to a blacksmith and his wife in 1736 on Toad Lane which is now Todd Street, worked as a cook. She was illiterate, but formed the sect Shaker which broke away from the Quakers in Bolton and fled to America in 1774 where she became *Ann the Word.* The Shakers or the Society of Friends is a Christian Protestant sect founded by George Fox (1624 – 1691) in England in the *17:th* century. Fox became a travelling preacher in 1647, and was imprisoned for blasphemy at Derby in 1650 when he suggested Judge Bennet to *quake at the word of the Lord*, and in so doing has secured for his sect the name Quakers which has become rather derogatory. It has had a profound influence on American life through their pacifism, belief in education, social quality and prison reform.

Stories of cities are the story of percolation. Cities are clusters which have grown out of villages and towns, and they meet and join each other to become a bigger conurbation of clusters. Then, when they degrade and shrink, they seem to be drawn away from certain lines representable by edges or bonds in a network. As time goes by, the area around these lines becomes more dangerous and less populated. The different parts of of the city seem to be shrinking each towards its own nucleus. In the end these nuclei become safe havens, oases, or forts surrounded by desolate land, and one by one they die out like a candle snuffed out. Manchester in 1774 was an old, compact market town surrounded by market gardens. In 1824 before the arrival of the industrial revolution, rich people still lived in the centre and the poor on the edge. In 1830s the city centre became unbearable and the former moved out to the suburbs of Whalley Range and Victoria Park. From then on until 1870s the population of the city doubled every ten years, when H. G. Wells described it as a 'great swirling mass of humanity'. It became at the same time *the most wonderful city of modern time* and a place of deprivation and squalor. From 1920s the city had shrunk until the event in 1996 after which it started to grow again at an amazing rate.

From Manchester to Penzance the coach goes again at 3:45 am on

† E. Margaret Burbridge, G. R. Burbridge, William A. Fowler, and F. Hoyle. Synthesis of the elements in stars. *Review of Modern Physics.* v. 29, no. 4, Oct. 1957.

Thursday 28 November 2002. I have no troubles with coaches nowadays, I quite like them. In fact they have become my home. The ride from Manchester to Cornwall is uneventful. The coach stops at various places along the way to drop off passengers and pick up new ones, but we only get off and walk around at Birmingham, Bristol, Plymouth and another small town where the Cornish air is so refreshing.

Last night on the coach before we reached Birmingham a youngster said to his friend, 'Oi! Stevie!', he was slightly drunk. He talked in a voice audible to everyone on the coach, not unpleasantly but in a drawn-out manner and entirely rubbish. They wanted to get off at a certain place along the way, but the driver said 'No!', they are going to reach a coach station in a few minutes' time, to which the same said to him, 'You are tight, aren't you?', which I feel is a covered insult since addressed to a man it has a homosexual nuance. He either got off in, or slightly before Birmingham when the coach stopped and did nothing, which I thought was strange. I slept and awoke on and off.

Cornwall is shaped like a finger with its tip at the Land's End pointing towards the Isles of Scilly or Scillies some 24 miles away. Most parts of the Scilly Islands belong to the Crown. The Cornish language was spoken here until 1777, the tin mined from the Bronze Age until 1998 when the last mine at South Crofty was closed following the collapse of the world's tin price in the 1980s. While Land's End is the westmost, the Lizard Point in The Lizard is the southmost point of England. The former is 9 miles from Penzance whereas the latter 11 miles from Helston. At Land's End there is a granite cliff 59 feet high, while at Lizard Point the headland is of greenish serpentine rock.

The South West Coast Path is perhaps the easiest one to follow among all the National Trails in England and Wales. You just keep the sea on one side and follow the acorn way-marks. The other paths are the Cleveland Way, the Cotswold Way, the Glyndwrs Way, the Hadrian's Wall Path, the North Down Way, the Offa's Dyke Path, the Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path, the Pembrokeshire Coast Path, the Pennine Way, the Pennine Bridleway, the Ridgeway, the South Downs Way, the Thames Path, the Wolds Way. Interesting websites include `www.ordsvy.gov.uk`, `www.swcp.org.uk` and `www.westcountrynow.com`.

The reflective studs you see on the roads are cat's eyes that are invented in 1934 by Percy Shaw (1890 – 1976). Each one of these has two pairs of prisms which reflect the light from the headlamps back to the driver. The stud moves down into a case underground when the wheel rolls over it, and whenever it does its eyes are wiped clean.

We arrive at Penzance in the afternoon. I try to walk to St. Michael's Mount but it is too far away. It gets dark by the time I am half way

there, so I return in order not to miss my coach. At 8:30 pm I get on Service 404 bound for London's Victoria. The following day I take Service 032 at 9 am from London to Winchester.

Today is 29 November 2002 I arrive here in Winchester from London. The ruin site of Wolvesey Castle had inhabitants since Saxon time or even before. The area on both sides of River Itchen was all marshy ground once, and wolves used to roam here freely and in plenty. The name *Wolvesey* means the *Isles of Wolves.* The castle seen in ruins today was built by Bishop de Blois. It was destroyed by the puritans during the Civil War. The ruins lie next to playing field of Pilgrims School.

Winchester once had at least six gates, namely one for each of the four directions, Durngate and Kingsgate. Among all these only the Kingsgate and the Westgate remain. There is a church over the Kingsgate called St. Swinthun-upon-Kingsgate which has been there since 13th century at the latest. In the Middle Ages there were many churches above city gates, but few remain to this day. The Westgate has been repaired many times. Its central arch dates from the reign of King Henry III in 13th century. There is a museum above the gate and above it the roof from where you can look over the city. Both the parapet and overhanging machicolations on top of it are now gone.

Standing within yards of Kingsgate is the Prior's Gate which leads from St.Swithun's Street into the Cathedral Close. It was originally built as a main gate into the Close. Above the gate is a tiny Church of St. Swithun.

Over the course of history kings and queens were crowned, lived and died or buried here. There are past monarch in the ground of the Winchester cathedral than in Westminster Abbey. The Anglo Saxon Chronicle and the Doomsday Book were both written here.

The Royal Oak Inn, built in 1630, has beneath it a subterranean bar that could date back to the Saxon time.

Butter Cross is a city cross which dates back to at least mid 14th century and used to be called the High Cross. It seems to sit snugly in a corner with buildings immediately on two of its sides, and strangely so too, since it could easily have looked out of place there otherwise. It was painted by Turner and later restored by Sir Gilbert Scott who based the restoration on an old engraving in 1865. At one time butter and eggs used to be sold on the steps at its base.

The Winchester Cathedral is built in a mixture of styles from Early Norman to Late Gothic. It was remodelled under William of Wykeham from Norman-Romanesque to Perpendicular Gothic. Construction of the Norman Cathedral began in 1079 by Bishop Walkelin. Jane Austen was buried here. Also buried here in 1683 was Izaac Walton (1593 –

1683) who in 1653 wrote *The Compleat Angler, or the Contemplative Man's Recreation*, an autobiography and philosophical study in the form of a dialogue between an angler, a fowler and a hunter. The various sections of it were built in different times, and some of the plans were abandoned. By contrast other cathedrals are usually built in one style only, for example Salisbury Cathedral.

The best way to go to St. Catherine's Hill from Winchester is to go past the ruins of Wolvesey Castle to the Cith Mill, walk across River Itchen to the other side, then follow the left branch of the river, walking along a footpath that runs more or less along the left side of it until reaching a park where there is another path branching to the left that leads uphill. The areas are in general water-meadows.

City Bridge crosses over the River Itchen. Close to it and standing astride the River is the City Mill which for centuries has been a water-mill. Owned by the Abbey of Wherwell, it was passed on to the citizen of Winchester following the Dissolution of the Monasteries during the time of Henry VIII. It was rebuilt in 1744 after the mill had fallen in ruins, this time it grounded corn for the citizens. It retired from active life around 1900, then given to the National Trust and let to the Youth Hostels Association. The first bridge on this site was said to be built by St. Swithun (852–863).

Winchester was an old capital of England. There are no coach stations here. All coaches stop on the roadside, just past the statue of King Ælfred, erected by Hamo Thorneycroft in 1901, to drop off and pick up passengers. Ælfred the King (AD 871 – 899) drove the Danes from Wessex.

In the museum there is the leech jar. During the 18^{th} and the 19^{th} centuries leeches were used for blood letting. The jar is a big ceramic jar the top of which is perforated to let in the air. Carboys are large, round glass bottles. The plaque years of the 17^{th} century requires immediate recognition of an apothecary's house, and a carboy containing coloured water is placed in pharmacies to make them easier to recognise. Towards the end of the 12^{th} century, that is in 1180s, the treasury and exchequer moved to London. The word *exchequer* comes from the Norman-French *eschequier*. It is the name given to the king's court of revenue because the accounts was calculated on a chequered cloth around which the officers sat. The sums of money received by the treasurer were with counters scored on the squares of this cloth, which resembles a chessboard, the process of which suggests a game of chess. Jettons were placed on an exchequer board or cloth which is used like an abacus.

The office of the chancellor of Exchequer was established under Henry III (1207 – 1272) and originally involved keeping the Exchequer seal.

The chancellor is responsible for national finance and economic policy. He usually resides at 11 Downing Street while the prime minister 10 Downing Street. But the present prime minister Tony Blair and the chancellor Gordon Brown both lives in each other's official residence, that is to say, the former at 11 and the latter at 10. The number 11 house is said to be more spacious. Tony Anthony Charles Lynton Blair was born in 1953. He makes a distinction between *academic* and *ethical* socialism, distance his party from its socialist base to promote *social market* value.

Venta belgarum mosaic is made from small cubes or tiles placed on top of a mortar layer which in turn rests on compacted layers of stones. In Roman time a Central-South School of mosaic workshops are based in Winchester, Chichester or perhaps Silchester. Venta Winchesta, Calleva Silchester and Levcomagus are close to one another, the lines connecting the three of which form a triangle. Used for making the mosaic are chopped bricks or tiles which give the red, orange, yellow tesserae. Limestone or chalk fragments give white and cream. Purbeck limestone gives a blue-grey hue, shale a black-grey one, and limestones and sandstones brown, green, grey and purple.

Roman's wealthy man's houses enjoy under-floor heating by hypocausts where heated air flows in passages or chambers beneath the raised, tiled floor. In AD 410 Emperor Honorius ended the control of Britannia from Rome.

The primitive people who lived here makes walls of wattle and daub. *Auroch* is a primitive ox and *torcs* twisted neck-rings. During 2100 – 1200 BC burials took place in round barrows, surrounded by a ring of ditch and in the centre of which is the burial pit. These barrows are usually associated with the Wessex culture (2000 – 1500 BC), and belong mainly to the Bronze Age. Long burial mounds dates from Neolithic periodl, that is the New Stone Age, while round ones from the Mesolithic period, that is the early Bronze Age. Barrows are normally made of earth. Those entirely made of stones are known as cairns. Barrows dated from the Roman time have a steep and conical outline, and often contain graves of wealthy merchants. Around 1500 BC inhumations were replaced by cremation burial. The cremated remains were put in a pot, placed in open cemeteries close to the living places. In front of a long barrow mound are two tapering rows of poles which lead towards the entrance. There is only one small entrance, and this leads into a chamber of wood or stone slabs in which is placed the dead body.

Winchester employs three types of recycling bins, namely those for green glass only, those for clean glass only, and those for brown glass only. The city was known in Roman time as Venta Belgarum, a route-

centre and a capital of a district. It became the capital of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Wessex in 519. It was the seat of government under Alfred the Great (Æfred, *c.*849 – *c.*901) and Canute. Egbert was crowned the first king of all England here in 827. Together with London it was declared capital of England under William the Conqueror (c 1027 – 1087) who was crowned in the Westminster Abbey on Christmas Day 1066. King Alfred founded the first English navy and in 1086 William I compiled the invaluable Domesday Book here.

The River Itchen on which Winchester situates is no river but an artificial channel made by the Roman around AD 70 to prevent flood and provide a defensive eastern moat. In Medieval time it was almost twice as wide as its width today of 5 metres.

I walk to St. Catherine's Hill on the top of which there is a plateau where there used to be a community. The plateau is only open on one side, and thus facilitates defence should this become necessary. There is a trace of a maze in square shape. It is thought to have been made sometimes during the Victorian Period, but the new outlines were probably built on top of what used to be even older than this. I walk along the border of the place on the outside and could notice nothing which shows that there is a plain very close by. It is only that I expect some kind of a hilltop or another in that direction, that I decide to climb up the mound which stretches along the right-hand side of the path. Then, 'Lo! and Behold!', I could hardly believe my eyes. Stretched out before me is another world, separated from the rest of the world below but for a single slope to one side. A dog barks at me from afar, roughly from where the maze must be. It is already getting dark, so I walk around quickly and then climb down the same way I came up. After this I go down a flight of steps, walk to a bridge and then follow the river or canal back to town. Darkness sets in while I am walking along the canal. It gets dark very early in winter. If you want to travel, the best time in summer when it gets dark sometimes as late as 10 pm.

The mismaze on St. Catherine's Hill was built before the 17th century, and is similar in structure to the game of nine men's morris. Three thousand years ago St. Catherine's Hill was a settlement. During the 3rd century BC a fort was constructed here. Between 100 BC and 50 BC Winchester was founded and people were drawn to the valley. The 12th century Norman Chapel on its summit is dedicated to St. Catherine. The chapel was demolished following the dissolution of the monasteries, and the hill passed to the ownership of Winchester College.

On my way to the hill someone had set up a big tent in the park or reserve area just before you got on to the path that goes upwards towards the hill-top. After these steps the path meets another one where

you must decide whether to turn to the right or to the left. I guess these two paths are parts of the same ring that circles the outer rim of the plateau. If this is so, you could be walking round and round in circle without getting anywhere closer to the hill top!

Once the outskirt of Winchester is reached I try to go to the Winchester Cathedral again, but find the roads and the signs so confusing that I lose my way several times. I do manage to find my way in the end, but there is already no need to go to the Cathedral at this hour when it is already pitch-dark. I buy some food and a can of baked beans from a supermarket, and eat the beans out of the can. The three important landmarks here are the Statue by Hamo, the Cathedral and the Westgate, the last one of which has just given me the bearings.

Beans are nourishing and rich in protein. At nine pence for a can of 420 g, baked beans are perhaps the cheapest food you can get in the UK. Because they are cooked, they presumably have lost most if not all of the vitamins. No nations on earth make beans that taste as good and are as rich in nutrients as Japan. The Japanese *nattō* or fermented beans is a highly controversial food. Similar to Marmite, one either loves it or hates it. I bought the food at Sainsbury's on Middlebrook Street at 5:52 pm. I remember having shopped earlier at 4:11 pm at Iceland on the same street.

Sainsbury's was founded in 1869 by John James Sainsbury (1844 – 1928), a grocer who started his business as one dairy shop in Drury Lane, London. It is now the largest supermarket chain in Britain.

My favourite spot around Winchester is the St. Catherine's Hill; my favourite place within the city is the Butter Cross. A fine example of a city cross it stands immediately in front of a timber-framed house, staring at the latter in the face. I like to climb up to the top of the steps at its base and sit there watching people going about their business below. Sitting here you are more or less above the line of sight of people on the street. It gives you strangely a privacy in the midst of the crowd. No wonder it is often used as a meeting place.

I think there is an admission charge to see the Stonehenge!

I leave Winchester for London on Service 035 at 8:25 pm. By that time it was already dark and I had walked around for a few hours. Everywhere is decorated with lights, for Christmas is coming. Behind the bus stop where the coaches stop is a park which has behind it a canal by the side of which is an open structure with a semi-circular roof. In the dark it is lit with electric light a group of youths are there talking and playing with one another and the guitar. All the unlit parts of the garden are bathed in the moonlight. Looking across the moonlit garden and paths to the lighted house beside the canal, and listening to the laughing young

voices amidst the surrounding silence. True, it sounds even to me like a summer. Young people are always reluctant to let their happy time go. From London to Manchester I go by Service 422, leaving at 11:30 pm.

Succeeding King Ethelred, King Alfred reigns 871 – 899. The *West Saxon Kings* of England are in 899 – 924 Edward the Elder (*c.*870 – 924), 924 – 39 Athelstan (*c.*895 – 939), 939 – 46 Edmund I (921 – 946), 946 – 55 Edred, 955 – 59 Edwy, 959 – 75 Edgar (944 – 975) the Peaceful, 975 – 78 Edward the Martyr (*c.*963 – 978), 978 – 1016 Ethelred II (968 – 1016) the Unready, and 1016 Edmund II (*c.*989 – 1016) Ironside. Then comes the *Danish Kings* 1016 – 35 Canute (*c.*995 – 1035), 1035 – 40 Harold I (1016 – 1040) Harefoot, and 1040 – 42 Hardicanute (*c.*1019 – 1042). The *West Saxon Kings* restored in 1042 – 66 Edward the Confessor (*c.*1003 – 1066), and 1066 Harold II (*c.*1020 – 1066). The *Norman Kings* 1066 – 87 William I (*c.*1027 – 1087) the Conqueror, 1087 – 1100 William II (*c.*1056 – 1100) Rufus, 1100 – 35 Henry I (1068 – 1135), and 1135 – 54 Stephen (*c.*1097 – 1154). The *House of Plantagenet* 1154 – 89 Henry II (1133 – 1189), 1189 – 99 Richard I (1157 – 1199) the Lion-Heart, 1199 – 1216 John (1167 – 1216) Lackland, 1216 – 72 Henry III (1207 – 1272), 1272 – 1307 Edward I (1239 – 1307), 1307 – 27 Edward II (1284 – 1327), 1327 – 77 Edward III (1312 – 1377), and 1377 – 99 Richard II (1367 – 1400). The *House of Lancaster* 1399 – 1413 Henry IV (1367 – 1413), 1413 – 22 Henry V (1387 – 1422), 1422 – 61 and 1470 – 71 Henry VI (1421 – 1471), 1461 – 70 and 1471 – 83 Edward IV (1442 – 1483), 1483 Edward V (1470 – 1483), and 1483 – 85 Richard III (1452 – 1485) Richard of Bordeaux. The *House of Tudor* in 1485 –1509 Henry VII (1457 – 1509), 1509 – 47 Henry VIII (1491 – 1547), 1547 – 53 Edward VI (1537 – 1553), 1553 – 58 Mary I (1516 – 1558) Blood Mary, and 1558 – 1603 Elizabeth I (1533 – 1603). The *House of Stuart* 1603 – 25 James I (1566 – 1625), 1625 – 49 Charles I (1600 – 1649), 1649 – 60 the Commonwealth, 1660 – 85 Charles II (1630 – 1685), 1685 – 88 James II (1633 – 1701), 1688 – 1702 William III (1650 – 1702) of Orange and Mary II (1662 – 1694), and 1702 – 14 Anne (1665 – 1714). The *House of Hanover* 1714 – 27 George I (1660 – 1727), 1727 – 60 George II (1683 – 1760), 1760 – 1820 George III (1738 – 1820), 1820 – 30 George IV (1762 –1830), 1830 – 37 William IV (1765 – 1837), and 1837 – 1901 Victoria (1819 – 1901). The *House of Saxe-Coburg* in 1901 – 10 Edward VII (1841 – 1910). And now the *House of Windsor* 1910 – 36 George V (1865 – 1936), 1936 Edward VIII (1894 – 1972), 1936 – 52 George VI (1895 – 1952), and from 1952 Elizabeth II (b. 1926). The Commonwealth is the Republican rule by Parliament during 1649 – 53 and 1659 –60. During 1653 – 59 Oliver Cromwell (1599 – 1658) ruled as Lord Protector.

Saturday 30 November 2002, I must have read from somewhere the

phrase *global gobbledygook* I have noted down in my notes. I think I must have come across it while reading some newspaper on the world politics. Similarly so must have I the following two words, minion and hooch.

Boy Scouts was founded by Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powel (1857 – 1941) in 1908 as the Scout Association. He began the Scout movement in 1907 with a camp for 20 boys in Brownsea Island in Poole Harbour. Together with his sister Agnes (1858 – 1945) he founded the Girl Guides in 1910. There are four branches of Scouts, namely the Beaver Scouts for boys aged 6 – 8, Cub Scouts for 8 – 10.5, Scouts for 10.5 – 15.5, and Venture Scouts for 15.5 – 20. In 1976 girls were admitted to the Venture Scouts, and in 1991 to the other branches.

Whenever I have no time to go by the coach, the buses become my home. For this I buy weekly tickets. What I normally buy are the Stagecoach Manchester's Megariders, one of which I use from 17th to 23rd December 2002. But today I buy myself the First's Network, which lets you go anywhere within the Greater Manchester. It costs £10. First has another kind of weekly ticket which can only be used in the city centre. I think it costs £7 or less, but I have never bought one. Stagecoach's control covers the whole of the city centre, Stockport and the airport. Through the bus 356 it also connects you with Hayfield where the Kinderscout is in the Peak District. For the rest of the Greater Manchester you are better off buying a First's ticket, especially so Bolton and Bury where they reign. Today I buy my first such ticket, Firstweek, which lasts from 3rd to 9th December. Stagecoach has increased the price of their Megarider from £7 previously to to £7.50.

Pilkingtons ceramic tiles are on display at the Bury Art Gallery. Unlike the new City Art Gallery in Manchester, the paintings here have no glass covering on them and therefore look better. There is Brylcreem, also a brand name of the hair-oil for men which is well-known in Thailand when I was there and young. The bulls-eye oil lamps were used by the police from 1840s until WWI when they were replaced by electric torches lamps attached to the policeman's belt. Back then the smoke from the oil burner of the lamp often blackened the face of its wearer. This is probably one reason why navy blue was chosen as the standard colour for police tunics, so that stains from the lamp would not as easily show up. The lamp is cylindrical in shape, has a conical cap, and is equipped with rings behind it for the belt to thread through. In front and on its body there is a circular glass two inches in diameter for light to pass through. The one on display here belongs to the Lancashire Constabulary.

Bury is the birth place of the modern police force. Robert Peel (1788 – 1850, b. 6 February at Chamber Hall, Lancashire) established a police

force while he acted as a home secretary during 1822 – 27 and 1828 – 30. As a Tory he entered Parliament in 1809. On 19 July 1829 was passed the Metropolitan Police Act. Early policemen were known as *Peelers* or *Bobbies*, both of which directly come from his name. He reformed the Tories under the name of Conservative Party on the basis of accepting changes and seeking supports from middle-class. Sir Robert Peel, the Second Baronet, was PM of GB and the UK during 1834 – 35.

Everywhere is decorated with lights. The same huge Christmas tree stands tall in front of the Town Hall at the same place where year after year it has stood. Fresh and jolly atmosphere is in every place. Christ is going to be born again before long, in the mind of the people, so soon from last year when he did the same thing, which makes the whole year but a wink.

Thursday 5th December 2002, percolation is the change of phases. When people's believes and thoughts turn into philosophy, that is also a change of phase. But do we see things as percolate because of the philosophy we have in our head, or do we have the philosophies in our head because our ideas percolates? Or, indeed, both? To put it plainer, 'Is it philosophy which causes percolation or is it percolation which causes philosophy?'

What a nice day is this! The Bolton Market is really alive. I think the market is on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Policemen parked their trailer between here and the bus station. On the side of the trailer is written, 'Hawk' with a picture of the same, it is a Victim Support. A few people stop and talk with them.

Bolton is a nice and cozy town. It has a fine museum and art gallery. I find a Poundstretcher shop five minutes' walk from the station where they sell delicious instant beef noodles at 79 pence for a pack of five.

The Poundstretcher's sell a number of their goods for one pound, and thus the shop's name. Another chain of shops similar to them in this respect is the Pound Empire which, among other things, sell stationery and kitchen wares. Before 1914 the pound was issued as a gold sovereign and as a note during 1914 – 83. It has become a coin since 1983. The inscription on the coin's edge in 1983 is *Decus et tutamen*, 'Ornament and safeguard'. The 1984 Scottish pound has as its inscription *Nemo me impune lacessit*, 'No one injures me with impunity'. And on the edge of the 1985 Welsh pound it is written *Pleidiol wyf i'm gwlad*, 'True am I to my country'.

Monday 9th December, I have cut myself badly across the palm of my right hand trying to put a drawer of the locker back after it has come off. Something had dropped behind the far end of it, into the space inaccessible to the hand from the outside, so I need to take the whole

thing off the grooves. This I did but found that I could not put it back in again. The stubborn thing refused to fit in, but instead cut across my palm a wound one inch long and quite deep. Through the gaping wound I can see the muscles underneath the layers of skin, so there will probably be a scar afterwards.

With the water from the tap in B9 I wash the wound for a while, then dry and put a sticking-plaster on top of it. I feel like fainting, so I lie down on top of a table near one of the windows which open to the west. A security staff came on his round to check whether I am working, and whether I have my student card and out-of-hour permit with me. I get up from the table to greet him, and apologise to him saying that I know you are not supposed to sleep here during the night, and I have never slept here during the night if I could help it. 'I have cut myself a wound this wide in my palm,' I say, showing him my right hand with the sticking-plaster and put close to it the thumb and the middle finger of my left hand two inches apart to give him an idea of the extend of the wound underneath. Then I reduce the gap between these two fingers to an inch and a half to be more realistic. Some of the things you need to exaggerate, otherwise they would look smaller than they actually are. An example of this is a statue which, if it seems live-size, is never less than one and a half times the size of the real person. And if you put a live-size statue of someone up on a raised base, it hardly looks half the actual size of his self.

'Ooo!', exclaims Richard with the face as though he is in pain. 'I think I'm going to die', I continue. He smiles, so I say, 'I am afraid of tetanus'. It is well past midnight, very early in the morning.

The wound heals so quickly it amazes me. I think it is in that part of the palm you call the ball of the thumb or *thenar eminence*. It stops bleeding in no time, and looks a mere straight line when I change the sticking-plaster at dawn. It could be that our palms cope with wound better than the other parts of our body. Together with the trace of dried blood along it, my hand looks like that of someone who has just been taken down from the cross after having been crucified.

Tuesday 10 December 2002, to Portree a second time. From Manchester at 1:30 am to Glasgow by coach and there I change at the Buchanan bus station at 7 in the morning. In Portree I walk to the Aros Centre where there is a pine forest, a visitor centre, a restaurant and a shop. There is the alphabetic trail here that teaches one Gaelic by writing the names of the trees in that language for each alphabet. The trail passes behind the visitor centre from one side of it to another. I could not find names for all letters of the alphabet, only some of them. I guess that these are all, and the remaining letters have no plant names associated

with them. On the way here there were students walking to their school which I passed by later.

In the Gaelic Alphabet Trail, *Aibisidh nan Craobh*, trees are used as an aid for teaching the alphabet of the Gaelic language to children. The trail is a short walk behind the 'House in the Forest', *Tigh na Coille*. I only manage to find trees for the following letters: **A**ilm, Elm; **B**eith, Silver Birch; **C**oll, Hazel; **D**arach, Oak; **E**adha, Aspen; **F**earn, Alder; **G**ort, Ivy; **I**ubhar, Yew; **L**uis, Rowan; **M**uin, wayfaring tree; **N**uin, Ash; **O**nn, gorse; **R**uis, Elder; **U**ath, Hawthorn.

In the forests there are several tracks criss-crossing one another. From no places can you see the sea except at one point where the trees are not as dense. There is a wooden bench and table here, so I sit to eat some bread and marmite. The pine trees are grown so dense, and they have twigs that weave together like a net or a filter that should effectively prevents any bird from flying down from above to the ground inside the forest. The trunks of these trees stand straight and tall. On the ground it is warm and there is less light. Trees can grow in the midst of winter because they live in the earth underneath. Their trunks and other parts we see are only sticking up in the air to get the sunlight. Forests are like lichen or moss, and each tree a part of it. Pine forests are like hairs upon the skin of the earth. I imagine myself a lice walking on the skin of a huge animal with dense hair covering this part of its body. Fish live in the water, trees in the earth. Both men and birds live in the air. The only difference is that the latter lives in a three-dimensional space whereas the former in two.

With the trees this dense the warm air created by their metabolism is kept inside the forest, so it is warmer here than it is outside. Soon I start to walk back towards Portree. In the town there is a bay where a creek meets the sea. The bay looks dirty only because there are plenty of rock outcrops and seaweeds. The fish and chips shop is closed and will open again in the evening. Someone at the Tourist Information Centre must have remembered me by now. This is a town well connected with the rest of the kingdom by coaches but is infinitely remote from it, not in the matter of distance alone, which is by no means much, but because it seems a tranquil fishing village, far from the madding crowd. The sun rises and sets here daily as it does in Manchester. But here it does so with Nature. This is its home as no other places are, certainly not in any cities. In Manchester the sun is but another source of light, albeit a unique one. Here it is one with the nature, a source of life, and it shines.

Portree specialises in the making of woollens. From here to Glasgow the coach leaves early at 3:20 pm. This is, after all, the Isle of Skye in the Highland. There is in Portree written on a local bus or coach parking

beside ours, 'Highland. driving Scotland forward'. From the Buchanan in Glasgow to Manchester the coach leaves at 11 pm.

Skye is the largest island of the Inner Hebrides. It is in the Highland region, off the west coast of Scotland. The Sound of Sleat and the islands of Raasay and Scalpay lie between it and the mainland. The Skye Bridge connects Kyleakin on this side with with Kyle of Lochalsh on the mainland. It is a toll bridge, and is privately financed. It was opened in 1995, and as the result the Calmac ferry service was closed. Coaches to Skye pass through both the bridge and both of these towns.

From a brochure given by Aros is written, *Thig crìoch air an t-saoghal, ach mairidh gaol agus ceòl, The world will come to an end but love and music will endure.* There is also the following riddle,

> Theid i null air a' chuan
> Thig i nall air a' chuan;
> Innsidh i naidheachd,
> Agus chan abair i guth.
>
> She will go across the ocean,
> She will return over the ocean;
> She will tell a tale,
> And not utter a word.

And the answer to this riddle is a pen. The Portree Forest in Gaelic is *Coille Phortrigh.*

> Thar lochan fala clann nan daoine,
> thar breoiteachd blair is stri an aonaich,
> thar bochdainn caithimh fiabhrais amhghair,
> thar anacothrom encoir aineart anraidh,
> thar truaighe eu-dochas gamhlas cuilbheart,
> thar ciont is truaillidheachd;
> gu furachair, gu treunmhor chithear
> an Cuilithionn 'Se'g eirigh air bh eile duilghe.
>
> Beyond the lochs of the blood of the children of men,
> beyond the frailty of plain and the labour of the mountain,
> beyond poverty, consumption, fever agony,
> beyond hardship, wrong, tyranny, distress,
> beyond misery, despair, hatred, treachery,
> beyond guilt and defilement;
> watchful, heroic, the Cuillin is seen
> rising on the other side of sorrow.

Friday 13 December 2002, this time to go Uig. Again Service 336 at 1:30 am to Glasgow and then Service 916 at 7 am from there to Uig. The town is half an hour further from Portree, or if properly called *Port Righ*. Uig is a ferry terminal. There is nothing much here. It is higher in latitude than even Inverness, and Inverness must be a little higher than Portree.

There are more people on the coach this time, about ten, or in fact at one time fourteen. From Glasgow to Uig there is snow on the grass and the hillsides. Water in the creeks is frozen. Day breaks while we past Loch Lomond. The road winds itself along the loch for a while, then leaves it for Glencoe which by now seems very familiar to me. The coach stops in front of a hotel somewhere, then it stops again in front of a small shop on the opposite side of the road of which is a lake of clean water. There is there a wooden platform. Water in the lake slaps against the planks of this platform, inviting anyone to come and stand on it. However no coaches stop here for long. Normally there is just time enough for the driver to buy groceries he wants. From here onwards the coach keeps either a lake or a firth on its left all the time while heading for, and until it enters Fort William. Here coaches stop for half an hour beside a Safeway. On the other side of the coach is a railway station.

From here one could see the snow on the mountains. Ben Nevis does not look the highest peak in Scotland from here. Along the way from here to the Isle of Skye there is snow in several places. At Portree I stay on the coach this time, for five minutes and we are off again. From here to Uig the road goes inland and there is nothing spectacular to see. At Uig the coach stops in front of a ferry office where some people get off to go to the toilets which are inside. Then we go on the pier to where the ferries are. After that the coach turns around, stops and will go no further. The driver has half an hour to eat and then we would go all the way back to Fort William again. I need to get off the vehicle and walk back to the ferry office where we were a few minutes ago. There is a workshop where ferries are made. They are working on the hull of one. Nearby there is a large toilet for the disabled. There is a shop that makes and sells potteries made by hand. A brochure says you can watch one being made. The sun is so close to the horizon all the time here in Scotland. Uig is a very small town. Behind it there is a hill and opposite it, on the other side of the firth, a mountain. There are also some islands to be seen in the Loch Snizort on to which it looks.

Soon the coach comes around from the pier to the open space by the sea that is a road, a car park and a coach stop all in one. There are rail tracks on the ground, presumably because this is a port. We leave Uig for Glasgow at 2:45 pm. The trip back is un eventful but exceedingly

beautiful. Soon we reach Portree. Then again from Portree we wind our way along the coast, up and down the hills. On the Skye Bridge, which is curved like a rainbow, to the left we can see islands and on the right the Loch Alsh and the mainland. We descend from the bridge on to Kyle of Lochalsh, and from here pass through, hills, plains, valleys, lakes before we reach Fort William and finally Glasgow where I wait and then board the Service 336 for Manchester. There are always drug dealers to be seen on busy streets and at coach stations in big cities, and Glasgow's Buchanan is no exception. Sometimes they do not even try to disguise themselves.

Sunday 15 December, I take a Service 422 coach from Manchester to London at five past midnight. No coach journeys are the same. Each and every trip has its own problems different from all the others. This time I have found myself a window seat in the middle. On my right sits an Asian woman who comes with two girls who sit in the seats in the front part of the coach and on the right-hand side. We have not left Manchester for long before an old man one seat behind us on the right-hand side of the aise suddenly pukes on his own dress. The woman who sits beside me calls out to the assistant staff whom we happen to have on our coach. He comes and offer the man some tissue papers, which the latter uses to wipe only his mouth and then sits there with his dress all wet from his own vomit. The woman offers the man her water bottle. I would not have offered mine as readily, for certain.

Then we talk. Her name is Rena, and the two girls are her daughter, Margaret who is 19 and plays the violin, and Elizabeth who is 16 and plays the piano. Both are students at the Chetham School of Music. Until 1999 they have studied for four years at the St. Andrew College in Christchurch, New Zealand. I have heard the name of the school when I was over there in Ashburton 19 years ago. They are going to back to Taiwan for Christmas, and have to find another coach at the Victoria Coach Station to take them to the Heathrow Airport. At 6:30 am we arrive at the Victoria Station, and I help them find the right gate. After two months of travelling by coach, I know my way around here well enough to offer them my help.

My coach leaves at 10:30. It is Service 022 which will take me to Margate. After Margate it will go further to the last stop at Ramsgate. I have long to wait for my coach, so I go out for a walk leaving Rena and her daughters waiting for their coach to come. They will be all right, I think to myself. They have been everywhere, there should not be a problem. I have told them to watch their belongings and not to leave any of them unattended. There is nothing more I can do now. Margaret has her violin with her. She is a proud girl. She was born in the UK.

They emigrated to NZ for fear of China's aggressive policy.

I walk to the British Library on Euston Road. It is a huge modern building. You can not walk the streets of London by sense alone. At least not before you have lived there long enough. These are no streets but paths in a maze. Even with maps I soon lose my way, not totally for I have only taken my eyes off the map a while ago, but enough to turn my well-planned path into a long detour. I ask the staff at a hotel where we are on the map, and when he does I could not believe what he says. But everything fits into their place soon in no time. Having learnt my lesson, I hereby stick my nose to the map and stop being pretentious. What happened was that I had gone right around the Green Park to the Hyde Park. I should have gone straight through the narrow point between them at Hyde Park, that is at Grosvenor Place.

I now walk along the Oxford Street, the veer to the left following the street towards Euston Station. Of course, the library is closed. I never expected it to be open at eight thirty in the morning. But at least I know now where it is. Reading room admission is by ticket only. Public area opens seven days a week, but the reading room does only six.

I walk back. Shops start to open on Oxford Street as I walk along. There are a few mini-supermarket. But things they sell are expensive, so I do not buy any food. It has been drizzling all along.

We are driving across a plain to Margate. On the coach it says, 'Ramsgate', so perhaps that is the coach's last stop. Somebody had dropped a map of London at a pelican crossing on Oxford Street. I picked it up and hung it by the strap on my small rucksack. Then I washed it in a fountain inside Hyde Park. Now I dry it on the coach heater. The heaters on a coach run along both sides of its body. Sometimes it becomes so hot it burns me. My left leg still carries a scar where it burnt.

Margate is in Kent, and the Kiwi accent is definitely Kentish. Both have exactly the same treatment of *a* and *i*. Now that *eight* has found its proper pronunciation with the trailing *i*, 'today' becomes *todeiy* and 'David' *Deivid*.

There is no coach station in Margate. From our point of view, it is a town built around the esplanade through which coaches pass. At two of the bus stops, one on each side of the street, is a sign with a figure of a coach. It is here that you must wait for the coach.

The driver drops me off on the side of the road closer to the sea. It has started to drizzle slightly. There is some wind blowing, and it is cloudy. I carry on further on foot in the same direction as the coach's until I reach the pier. It is a stone wall on top of which you can walk, resembling a breakwater. I walk the pier to the far end of it. The wind is still blowing quite strong. I put my cap on backwards to keep it from

being blown away. The air is so refreshing, so good after these long hours on the coach. I look up at the sea birds which cry as they fly pass.

Margate is in the Isle of Thanet which is bounded by the North Sea at the Thames estuary and the rivers Stour and Wantsum, and was an island until the 16^{th} century. From the pier I walk to the cliffs which is nearby. The is on the beach there a small concrete platform with semi-circular stands made up of rows of seats in steps. There are shower outlets and paved places for people to lie down in the sun. A long flight of steps climbs up to the top of the cliff. I take these steps and then walk down along the road towards the town. At these Canterburian cliffs put an abrupt end to the land. Beyond it is the sea or rather the shore below. There are what look like outcrops of rocks next to the shore before the sea.

These outcrops are no rocks, however. On closer examination they are all white. The reason they look dark and blackish is only because they are covered by seaweeds. They are remnants of past reefs.

Kent is truly a fish and chips country. At one Fish & Chips shop there is a special offer of Saithe fillet and chips for £1. Surely the price here for these is cheaper than at other places in the UK. I see two Thai restaurants here, one in the old town and the other on behind the promenade, in a street that branches off from it.

A take-away shop has somehow got their stove all in flames. 'Use a wet blanket! Put it on top!', I tell the two men who could not make up their minds what to do. But no one heeds my advice. Wet towels are the best and easiest way for putting out flames on stoves. Water is of little use and could be dangerous, since these flames burn on oil which repels water. The oil readily separates itself from the water, and what is more, water never covers it. If you find a piece of thick, strong water-absorbing cloth big enough to cover the flames, soak it thoroughly with water, and spread it on top of the flames, you can quickly and easily extinguish the fire because it has no supply of oxygen. I did this once at the Samsi restaurant in Manchester where I used to work, when our bullying chef stood by, helplessly watching at the flame he had himself started. After having tried all possible ways he could think of, for instance hitting it with various things and fanning it, the flame still remains like a phoenix. I snatched up a towel, covered the flame with it, and 'Presto!' the flame was immediately finished. The towel I used then was not even wet. It has all to do with oxygen without which no earthly flames can exist. In the Samsi's case, the fire wanted to consume the towel, but the towel prevented the oxygen from getting to it. Fires live on towels and oxygen. While the towel offered itself as a sacrifice, it also deprived its consumer of the essential ingredient for burning, oxygen. The flames could no

sooner burn it with the heat they produced, than died for lack of air. It is a glutton suffocated by the food he eats.

There is a sweet shop at the promenade. Here I buy some fudges, one with three stripes, another with layer of chocolate and cocoa, and the other with lemon ice flavour. Fudges are made from sugar and coconut. The big man inside the sweet shop says it was not him who made these fudges. There are a great number and varieties of them, in pots, in jars, on shelves and in barrels or rather cylindrical plastic containers placed on the floor. He explains to me the differences among the ones I bought.

This area is under the Thanet District Council. I walk around in the dampness of a recent rain. Standing on the beach in groups like penguins and sleeping are the sea gulls. It is only 5 pm now but already dark. Even considering the cloud, we are doing better here than in Scotland where there are seven hours of daylight, that is from 9 am until 4 pm.

Because of the sea, promenades seem similar everywhere. The promenade here reminds me of the one in Blackpool. Both are similar in a way, but here there are much less exaggerations. There is a sex shop here where things they sell are very dear.

I still find myself could not mew properly. This greatly bothers me. Whether it is from the ear problem I have or the effect of the medicine I took because of it, I do not know. But I do feel that there is something amiss because I used to be able to make a beautiful and resounding mew.

> Then all, wit ails in heart and lungs,
> In liver or spint,
> Rushed here to be cured like tongues,
> By dipping in the brine.

Margate was a pioneer in seabathing. Here Thomas Barber 1736 created the first commercial sea water bath in England.

The lamps placed on the waist-high fences which line the pedestrian paths have a beautifully casted figure of two sturgeon as their base. The restoration of these Victorian sturgeon lamp is funded by the EU commission.

At 5 pm I could have got on another coach to go to Ramsgate, but because the driver says there is no guarantee that I will be able to come back from there to Margate again to catch my coach to return to London, I do not go. Both trips, that is the one from Ramsgate here and the one from here to London, are on the same coach, but have only a ticket to return to Victoria from here. I return from Margate to London at 6:20 pm, and at 10:30 pm on Service 540 from there to Manchester.

Percolation is a theory of connections. When a network of something connects, one says that it percolates. The easiest way to see this is

by imagining that you suspend something from above using a truss-like network of links. If you take the links off randomly one by one until that something drops, then we say that you have succeeded in making the weaknesses of the network percolate. Similarly the strength of our network percolates when we take all its links away, and start to put them back one piece at a time. At the first instance when our object is connected to the fixing place above by some subset of the links, we says that the connection of the links has percolated. Percolation does not have to occur in networks. In continuum percolation, for instance, two randomly placed objects connects when they touches each other. One may put it another way and say that the continuum percolation is a percolation where the overall positions of the links are potluck instead of planned. Therefore the continuum percolation has no initial underlying networks. By 2002 I have come to my own conclusion that the continuum percolation may underlie some of the percolation of networks. Each of the links of the networks may continually percolate first, and then a number of these links networkwisely percolate.

I see languages as being connected to each other by their written language. I want to preserve the quaint languages of the world from dying, and for this purpose has begun to develop written language for them which is based on the same group of letters, namely the roman alphabet. I am reasonably satisfied with my first attempt, an experimental application of the roman alphabet to the Thai language, which results in a self-consistent system that is a one-to-one mapping to the original system, and which is easy to use. I have completed the core part of this work towards the end of 2001. Below I use it to write in Thai a poem by Heinrich Heine (1797 – 1856), *Mit Myrten und Rosen*,

> Mit Myrten und Rosen, lieblich und hold,
> mit duft'gen Zypressen und Flittergold,
> möcht' ich zieren dies Buch wie 'nen Totenschrein,
> und sargen meine Lieder hinein.
>
> O könnt' ich die liebe sargen hinzu!
> Auf dem Grabe der Liebe wächst Blümlein der Ruh',
> da blüht es hervor, da pflückt man es ab, –
> doch mir blüht's nur, wenn ich selbe im Grab.
>
> Hier sind nun die Lieder, die einst so wild,
> wie ein Lavastrom, der dem Ätna entquillt,
> hervorgestürtzt aus dem tiefsten Gemüt,
> und rings viel blitzende Funken versprüht!
>
> Nun liegen sie stumm und totengleich,
> nun starren sie kalt und nebelbleich,

doch aufs neu die alte Glut sie belebt,
wenn der Liebe Geist einst über sie schwebt.

Und es wird mir im Herzen viel Ahnung laut:
der Liebe Geist einst über sie taut;
einst kommt dies Buch in deine Hand,
du süßes Lieb im fernen Land.

Dann löst sich des Liedes Zauberbann,
die blaßen Buchstaben schaun dich an,
sie schauen dir flehend ins schöne Aug',
und flüstern mit Wehmut und Liebeshauch.

my own 1998 translation.

Dòay *Myrtle* lae Kulhạḅ, soayngạm lae ăunvhạn,
dòay *cypress* dị̀ sảngặngạm lae daung dị̀ rayiḅrayaḅ,
khà ywạk toktặeng nhangsụe nān hài pen mhuan susạn,
lae kloḅ fhang blẹng rāung khaung khà ao vāi khàngnaị.

Ọ biang thà khà fhang gvạmrak khaung khà khào vāi naị nān dòay dài!
Ḅon lhumśob hăeng gvạmrak phli daukmāi lekk̈ hăeng gvạm sàngoḅ,

dị̀nàn man ḅěngḅạn khùen, dị̀nàn gon kàụ ded ao man pai, –
tặe khaung khà ca ḅạn kàụtặumùa khà ẹng ywŭ naị lhumśob lặew dàonān.

Nị̀ pen bianggặe ḅodblẹng, dị̀ grāngnhūeng goey guekganaung,
pranhūeng dhạr *lava*, zùeng dòamkloḅ vẹdảnạ,
bùng dalak aukmạ cạk viyyạn̄ sŏan luek dị̀sud,
lae sạd prakạy duc sạyfā fạd pai rauḅ dàn!

Taunnī man naun ywŭ ngiaḅb̈ mhuan tạy lặew,
taunnī man càungmaung ywặng yen dàn lae zịdfạng,
tặe cạk gvạmprạthảnạ naị ảdịt dị̀ phud khùen mạ mhăị man kàụ tūentọa khùen,
mùa viyyạn̄ hặeng gvạmrak khào grauḅglum man ịk hon nhŭeng.

Lae gvạm gid mạkmạy phud khùen mạ ywŭ děnjad naị caị khà:
viyyạn̄ hặeng gvạmrak khào kad krăun man dan dị;
van nhŭeng khàngnhà nhangsụe lèm nī ca mạ thueng mụe cào,
cào phù gụe vhạncaị naị dạenklai.

Lặew montả khlang khaung ḅodblẹng ca pen isára,
toa nhangsụe dị̀ luanlạng ca càung maung cào,
ywặng àunvaun man ca càung tạ dị̀ soayngạm khaung cào,

lae man ca kraziḅ ywặng sìn vhang lae ywặng siang kraziḅ khaung gonrak.

—

Tout le malheur des hommes vient d'une seule chose, qui est de ne savoir pas demeurer en repos, dans une chambre.

Pascal